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CHRISTIANITY AND CHILDHOOD;
Or, The Relation of Children to the Church.

THE

HISTORIC EPISCOPATE

A STUDY OF

ANGLICAN CLAIMS AND METHODIST ORDERS

BY

R. J. COOKE, D.D.

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TO THE

REV. BISHOP ISAAC W. JOYCE, D.D., LL.D.,

Whose love for historical studies

and sound learning is equaled only by his apostolic zeal in caring for the flock of Christ, and whose broad sympathies for all forces that make for righteousness among men is an inspiring example to all who would seek the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace,

THIS VOLUME

is respectfully inscribed.

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
MAY 3 1989

PREFACE.

AN historical paper by the writer in the *Methodist Review* resulted, to his surprise, in a request from eminent quarters that in view of the more than academic interest awakened in the doctrine of the historic episcopate a volume might be prepared on that particular branch of the general subject treated of in the article mentioned. The following pages are a response to that desire. The difficulty of writing a book on this important theme in such manner that it shall be acceptable to all classes will be appreciated perhaps by those who are acquainted with the vast extent of ground to be gone over, and the many problems which perplex the candid historian; and yet we may truly say that no pains have been spared to meet the requirements of the general reader, and, in some degree, the more exacting demands of the critical student.

In that part treating of Methodist orders we have confined ourselves wholly to that phase of the subject on which special emphasis is placed by Anglicans, purposely refraining from extended discussion of some questions regarded as debatable among us, and for the adequate treatment of which the future may grant both facilities and time.

It would have been much easier to have written a larger work. And it would have been an easy matter to have increased the size of the present volume by inserting transcripts of important documents and records relating to events in the Elizabethan period of the Reformation in England referred to in these pages; but condensation to the utmost limit was required, and the results of prolonged research have sometimes been compressed into a few lines or within the limits of a single page.

The literature on the subject is voluminous, and much assistance is given the student to know the best. Anglican critics no doubt will object to some authorities on whom we rely; but if at any time we have gone down to Ashdod to sharpen our spears among the Philistines, it is in order that we might the more effectually cope with those who are fighting the battles of the Philistines. There is no reason why we should discard a fact because it is found in Lingard, Raynal, or Estcourt, and not in Burnet, Haddan, Bailey, or Bramhall. What we seek is the truth, and while our critics may doubtless wish that we had limited our researches to a certain class of writers, it has pleased us in our search for the whole truth to follow our own judgment in pursuit of the same. We have not followed any authority blindly, however. Whenever it was possible for us, with the facilities at hand, we have carefully examined im-

portant data and compared various views before reaching a conclusion.

Historic truth is not obtained by a bare recital of isolated facts, however true they may be as actual events. They must be studied in their historic setting, in the atmosphere they have created or in which they are found, and he only who can abandon himself in spirit to the age or to the movements of which he writes, without losing the vantage ground of his own time, can be truly regarded as having apprehended the truth of history. This principle has determined us in our study of the subject before us, and has guided us in the interpretation of the events with which we have had to deal.

The purpose of the volume is not to dim the glory of any Church. Its real object, no matter what its apparent aim may seem to be, is to defend the principles of the Reformation relative to Church government, to lay bare the grounds of Anglican claims to an historic episcopate, to set in clear light once more the validity of Methodist orders, and thus by breaking down some middle walls of partition to contribute something to the tendency toward unity and peace in the Church of Jesus Christ.

That it may accomplish this, its true purpose, is the earnest prayer of the author.

R. J. C.

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY, CHATTANOOGA,
April, 1896.

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THE

HISTORIC EPISCOPATE.

CHAPTER I.

General Survey.

ISOLATED from the Greek and Latin communions by insurmountable barriers, and maintaining a rigid exclusiveness toward Protestant Churches, the Established Church of England and its offshoot, the Protestant Episcopal Church, hold a position among the Churches of Christendom which is as unique as it is untenable. The Anglican Church, in which term, for convenience, we include the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church, acknowledges the claims of the Roman and Greek Churches to apostolical succession and the validity of the sacerdotal character of their ministry. But neither of these communions, in return, recognizes in any degree Anglican claims to the succession, or regards as valid its ministerial orders. These orders are rejected by those Churches as spurious, as defective both in matter and in form,

and the Church itself as being without mission or jurisdiction.[1]

The relation which the Greek and the Latin Churches maintain on theological and canonical grounds toward the Anglican communion that Church, singularly enough, now holds toward all the Churches of the Reformation. Protestant Churches generally admit, on evangelical principles, the sacred character of Anglican orders, without assenting, however, to the unhistorical dogma of apostolical succession or to the assumptions to a priestly character of the Anglican ministry. But the Anglican Church rejects the orders of all other Protestant Churches, whether in England, in Holland, in Sweden, in Germany, or in this country, and, forgetting its origin, sets up for itself the exclusive claim, as against them, of being the one true Church of God—as alone possessing a valid ministry, and, therefore, as having the sole divine right to administer the Christian sacraments according to Christ's holy commandment.[2]

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[1] This was the decree (April, 1704) of Clement XI in the case of the Anglican Bishop Gordon, who submitted to Rome. Haddan, referring to this instance, says: "Analogous, but in large part not identical, difficulties hinder the recognition of our orders by the Eastern Church."—*Apostolic Succession in the Church of England*, p. 28.

[2] Bishop of Exeter, *Second Triennial Charge*, 1836, p. 44; Bishop Beveridge, *Works*, vol. ii, 106, 147, 148, 165, 257; Saravia, *Treatise of the Different Degrees of the Christian Priesthood*, Oxford, pp. 20, 21; Hows, *Vindication of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, p. 39; Palmer, *On the Church*.

To the student of history it will appear passing strange that any Protestant Church should arrogate to itself such an indefensible distinction. Nevertheless, to the prejudice of other Churches and to the great injury of evangelical truth and Christian charity, this doctrine has recently been reaffirmed with all the solemnity that official sanction could give.

In 1886 the House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church laid down four principles as a condition of union with other Protestant Churches. The Lambeth Conference of English bishops adopted, two years later, similar conditions. The fourth principle or condition of union adopted by both houses was the acceptance of the historic episcopate, by which was signified a recognition of the absolute necessity of lawfully derived episcopal ordination to the validity of ministerial functions in the Christian Church. Without this ordination there can be no true ministry, and, by consequence, no true Church; for where there is no true ministry there are no true sacraments, and a Church without sacraments is no Church. Now, acceptance of this dogma of the historic episcopate, which is but another phrase for apostolical succession, involves belief in many declarations which are both unscriptural and unhistorical:

1. That bishops are by divine right a distinct

order in the Christian ministry, higher than presbyters, and possess powers and authority not belonging to presbyters as such.[1]

2. That bishops are the successors of the apostles, and have as such the sole right to ordain to the Christian ministry.[2]

3. That no ministry lacking such ordination is valid, and that the ordinances of religion administered by anyone not thus ordained are unavailing as means of divine grace.[3]

Such are a few of the principles involved in the doctrine of the historic episcopate.

With the dogma of apostolical succession, that is, a personal tactual succession, this treatise is not directly concerned. A chronological, uninterrupted succession in Christendom is no longer worthy of the serious consideration of the historian. While it may be satisfactorily inferred from the New Testament and from early Christian writings that episcopacy, in moderate degree, was the prevailing polity in the apostolic age, that there never was a time when bishops, overseers, or superintendents were not recognized as the chief pastors of the flock of Christ, still, the same Scriptures unmistakably teach that bishops are not successors of the apostles, either in power, in gifts, in grace, or in authority;

[1] Rose, *Commission and Consequent Duties of the Clergy*, Appendix, pp. 189, 190.

[2] Palmer, *Treatise on the Church*, vol. i, pp. 142, 143.

[3] Dean Hook, *Church Dictionary*, art. "Anglo-Catholic Church."

that they are not by divine right a distinct order from presbyters, but that, on the contrary, they are of the same order (Acts xx, 17, 28; Titus i, 7; 1 Peter v, 23); that the qualifications for a bishop are identical with those required for a presbyter (compare 1 Tim. iii, 2–7, and Titus i, 6–10); that presbyters have the same power and authority in ordination as bishops; and, finally, that continuity of apostolic teaching is the only true and apostolic succession.

This was also the belief of the primitive Church. Clement of Rome (A. D. 65) knows nothing of three orders in the ministry. With him, as with the New Testament writers, bishops and presbyters are the same. Writing to the church at Corinth on the occasion of a sedition in that church, he says:

> For it would be no small sin in us should we cast off those from their episcopate who holily and without blame fulfill the duties of it. . . . Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before these times, . . . for they have no fear lest anyone should turn them out of their place.

The Didache, containing a summary of apostolic teaching, and which is among the earliest documents of the Church, like the Epistle of Clement, knows only of two orders—bishops, who, of course, were presbyters, and deacons. Irenæus (A. D. 167), speaking of heretical ministers elated with pride in having the principal seat, exhorts the faithful to hold allegiance to those who "keep the doctrine of the apos-

tles, and with the order of the presbyters—*presbyterii ordine*—exhibit soundness in word. . . . The Church cherishes such presbyters, of whom the prophet says, 'And I will give thy governors—ἄρχοντες—in peace, and thy bishops—ἐπισκόπους—in righteousness.'"[1] Jerome, summing up the conclusions from Scripture and the practice of the apostolic Church, writes:

A presbyter, therefore, is the same as a bishop; and before dissensions were introduced in religion by the instigation of the devil, and it was among the peoples, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas," churches were governed by a common council of presbyters. . . . But because at that time they called the same persons bishops whom they called presbyters, therefore the apostle speaks of bishops as presbyters indifferently. Should this still seem ambiguous to anyone unless verified by another testimony, in the Acts of the Apostles it is written—

He then cites the various well-known passages, and from Heb. xii, 17; 1 Peter v, 1, and then continues:

Therefore, as we have shown, presbyters were the same as bishops; but by degrees, that the plants of dissension might be rooted up, all responsibility was transferred to one person. Therefore, as the presbyters know that it is by the custom of the Church that they are to be subject to him who is placed over them, so let the bishops know that they are above presbyters rather by custom than by divine appointment.

But, notwithstanding the demonstrable fact that apostolical succession can never be proved either from Scripture or from history,[2] we may grant the

[1] *Adversus Hæreses*, c. xliv.

[2] Referring to this want of historic truth, Perceval, *Apostolic Suc-*

supposition of it for the time being in order more clearly to elucidate the truth. Let it be conceded that there has come down from the apostles an unbroken succession of bishops, and that that succession continues and is in force at present. Let it be granted, further, that the Roman and the Greek Churches are in possession, as Anglicans assert, of this succession. The questions before us, then, are, Does the Church of England or the Protestant Episcopal Church possess this same succession? Have these Churches, tried by the principles they lay down for other Churches, a truly valid ministry?

Now, since the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church, by insisting upon this theory of succession, which by them has been made an article of belief equal to a revealed doctrine, reject the validity of ordination in other Protestant Churches, the right to challenge, on these same Anglican principles, the validity of orders in the Established Church and its American offshoot can neither be questioned nor denied. These Churches possess no character or authority which would entitle them to exemption from trial on their own

cession, p. 17, says: "If nothing will satisfy men but actual demonstration I yield at once." Riddle, *Christian Antiquities*, Preface: "Whatever may become of apostolic succession as a theory or an institute, it is impossible to prove the fact of such succession." And again in his *Plea for Episcopacy*: "It is impossible to prove the personal succession of modern bishops, in an unbroken episcopal line, from the apostles or men of the apostolic age." See also Keble on *Tradition*, p. 96.

principles. It cannot be quietly assumed that the Church of England is undoubtedly founded on an historic, legitimate episcopate, and that therefore it possesses the right to lay down imperative conditions for other Churches. Before it or the Protestant Episcopal Church can lawfully presume to do this it must produce its own undoubted credentials, and must make good, without any element of incertitude in its evidence, its own high claims to authorized succession.

Upon what, then, does this claim to the historic episcopate in the Church of England rest? As an historic fact it rests solely on the validity and sacramental character of Matthew Parker's consecration to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. He is the head of the stream. From him the English episcopate is derived. He, and he only, is the foundation of the English hierarchy; and, unless it can be demonstrated, as it has not been and, as we think, never can be, without any suspicion of doubt that he was truly and canonically ordained, then, on Anglican principles, this historic episcopate in the Church of England is a usurped claim, a pretension engendered of ecclesiastical pride, or an unfortunate alternative, which has proved a girdle of Ate, forced upon that Church by religious and political circumstances; and the claim of the Church of England is false, however agreeable that claim may be to the dignity and to the illustrious history of that vener-

able Church. Its orders, on the same principles, like those of other Churches, are null and void. Once the issue is made nothing can be taken for granted. Historic facts alone will suffice. Assumptions of what might have been or what, judging from circumstances, must have been done will be of no avail. The undoubted historic facts alone will be admitted in evidence. In no instance will any degree of rational doubt be allowed, nor should Anglicans who sit in judgment on the orders of other Churches desire it; for, if in the evidence there is reasonable ground for doubt, then, on the universal legal maxim, "*Nemo dat quod non habet*," the validity of all subsequent ordinations emanating from that source would also be doubtful. Such uncertainty would be death to the historic episcopate and annihilation to the affirmations and demands of Anglican prelates.

It is our purpose, then, to show: 1. That the fact of Matthew Parker's consecration is at least doubtful; 2. That if he was consecrated the consecration, on Anglican principles, was invalid; 3. That if valid it did not continue the apostolical succession; 4. That the Church of England, when established by law in the Reformation, utterly rejected the theories and principles now maintained by High Church teachers as the original doctrines of the Church of England.

CHAPTER II.

Consecration of Matthew Parker.

WHEN the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, ascended the throne of England, in 1558, the Roman Catholic faith was the established religion of the nation. It was a period of convulsion and of change. Whether the Reformation, which had been inaugurated under Henry, continued with varying success under Edward VI, but was suddenly arrested by the hand of Mary, would again revive in the new reign was a State problem, as well as a religious question. Elizabeth, however, was considered as favorable to Reform, and in her the hopes of the Protestants were centered. As Froude points out, three fourths of the people of England, a third of the privy council, and a large majority of the lay peers were opposed to a change of religion; but the terrible persecutions under Queen Mary, during which Bishops Hooper, Ferrar, Latimer, Ridley, and Archbishop Cranmer were brought to the stake, had produced generally a decided reaction from the popular enthusiasm which had placed Mary on the throne and had thereby restored the Catholic teaching. The influence, also, of a powerful minority at court was

on the side of the Reformed doctrines. Such ministers as had preached the pure word of God, had zealously advocated the principles of the Reformation under Edward VI, and had fled the kingdom when Mary became queen, were now returning from Strasburg, Zurich, and Geneva, and were beginning anew without hindrance the work of reform.

But England was still legally Catholic. All laws of the realm which had been enacted in the preceding reign for the protection or enrichment of the Roman Church were still in force. Catholic bishops occupied the sees; not one Protestant bishop was in possession of a diocese; Elizabeth was crowned by a Roman bishop; the Roman missal was used in public worship, and in all respects the religious character of the nation appeared unchanged. Elizabeth herself was in reality but little inclined to the doctrines of the Reformation. Possessing an elastic conscience, which enabled her to adjust herself with facility to the varying exigencies of the situation, she had no desire to radically change the religion of her subjects, whatever may have been her purpose to alter the form of it or to employ its power and prestige in behalf of the crown, at home or abroad.[1] She believed in the real presence,[2] which at that

[1] Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, vol. i, part i, 59, 74, 77; Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, i, 585; Collier, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi, 200; Froude, *History of England;* Green, *Short History of the English People.*

[2] Strype, *Annals*, vol. i, part i, 2, 3.

time signified transubstantiation ; retained the crucifix and lighted candles on the altar in the royal chapel ;[1] denounced marriage of the clergy ;[2] and threatened to issue injunctions in favor of the Roman Church.[3] Before the prayer book which was to take the place of the liturgy in use under Mary was presented to Parliament for adoption, Elizabeth made changes in it which brought it so near to the Roman missal that the pope agreed to ratify its use in England should his supremacy be acknowledged.[4] She insisted that ministers officiating at the eucharist should be clothed with vestments worn by Catholic priests in the celebration of the mass, and that the bread used in the sacrament should be in the form of the wafer.[5] The queen at the beginning of her reign was evidently desirous, like her father Henry, that with the exception of papal supremacy the old religion, with its magnificent ritual and splendor of ceremony, should remain, as it was, the religion of her kingdom.

The chiefs of the Reformed party, however, were

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[1] "The queen, still to this year [1565], kept the crucifix in her chapel."—Strype, *Annals*, vol. i, part ii, 198–200.

[2] Strype, *Annals*, vol. i, part i, 118.

[3] Strype, *Life of Parker*, i, 217, 218. There was some fear that she would abandon Protestantism altogether. See Burnet, *Records*, 17, in Appendix to Strype's *Parker*.

[4] Strype, *Annals*, vol. i, part i, 340 ; Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, ii, 645 ; Collier, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi, 308, 309.

[5] Cardwell, *History of Conferences;* Short, *History of the Church of England*, 537–549 ; Collier, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi, 248, 250.

of another mind. They were determined that the Reformation should triumph. The Word of God should be free in England. Evils indeed had followed in the wake of Reform; nobles had espoused its cause that they might enrich themselves with the spoils of the Church; the populace, in the first flush of freedom from superstition, had plunged into immoral excesses; there was a restlessness abroad that endangered the stability of the State; but these misfortunes, incident to great changes, would be remedied if the authority of the crown should be thrown on the side of pure religion. On the other hand, the Church of Rome was Antichrist, and should receive no support from a Christian State; the doctrine of the mass was a horrid blasphemy; the worship of saints, of relics, and the adornment of churches with images and pictures were gross superstition; all popish rites and ceremonies and use of vestments—"Aaronic ornaments"—all crosses and altars and obeisances, and the employment of dead tongues—mere mumblings of the Amorites—were wholly alien both to the spirit and to the letter of the Gospel. There could come no peace to the nation till idolatry was put out of the land.

Thus the distinction between the Reformed doctrine and the Catholic teaching was, not merely a variation of forms or a question of authority, but a radical difference of religion. The Christianity accepted and revered by the Romanist was altogether

another system from that which was apprehended by the Puritan reformer.

Religious questions were national interests, and the antagonism of Rome to the person and policy of the queen made a change in the religious character of the kingdom a political necessity. Parliament assembled; bills were presented; and the building of the temple of the Reformers was again resumed. By repealing the ecclesiastical laws which had restored the Catholic faith in the reign of Queen Mary, and by reviving certain acts of Henry VIII and Edward VI, the Reformed doctrine was legally established in the place of the Roman faith as the religion of the nation. Elizabeth was made supreme head of the Church in England. The wording of the Act of Supremacy is of particular importance. Parliament declared:

> Such jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and preeminences, spiritual and ecclesiastical, as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority have heretofore been, or may lawfully be, exercised or used for the visitation of the ecclesiastical state and persons, and for reformation, order, and correction of the same, and of all manner of errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, offenses, contempts, and enormities, shall forever, by the authority of the present Parliament, be united and annexed to the imperial crown of the realm.

A clause in the same act granted authority to the crown to delegate the powers above mentioned to persons, lay or clerical, who should act as commissioners to order, restrain, or amend anything in the Church "which, by any manner of spiritual

or ecclesiastical power, authority, or jurisdiction, can or may lawfully be reformed, ordered, redressed, corrected, restrained, or amended." By this act not only was the entire discipline of the Church placed in the power of the crown, but even laymen, who may or may not be Christians at all, might exercise decisive authority in all ecclesiastical affairs over the ministers of religion. Further, by the Act of Uniformity it was made a statutory law "that the queen's majesty, by the advice of her ecclesiastical commissioners, may ordain and publish such ceremonies or rites as may be most for the advancement of God's glory and the edifying of the Church." Strype[1] also says that in this first Parliament a bill passed the House of Commons empowering the queen to collate or appoint bishops to vacant bishoprics, without rites or ceremonies. The power to do this, however, was already involved in the Act of Supremacy.

Thus all spiritual jurisdiction, the supreme power of guiding and governing the Church of God, was placed in the hands of Elizabeth. The ministers of religion, even in the exercise of their calling, were mere officials, mere servants of the crown, which could prescribe the forms of prayer, ordain the character of rites and ceremonies, and with a word make or unmake these ministers at will.

[1] *Annals*, p. 67.

The plea made by Haddan and others, that Elizabeth and her Parliament were not sources of authority for the Church, but that they only gave the sanction of civil law to its decrees and ritual regulations, by which plea Anglicans hope to remove certain difficulties from their claim to the historic episcopate, was long ago made by Bishop Burnet in his *Vindication of English Ordinations*. In that book he cites in justification the interference in Church affairs of the emperors Constantine, Theodosius, and Charles the Great. But he was careful, as recent Anglican writers are also careful, to avoid the rock upon which this plea is wrecked—the fact that neither these emperors, nor any ruler after them, ever arrogated to themselves supremacy in the Church, or exercised any authority in matters of religion or any jurisdiction over bishops or ministers as supreme heads of the Church, such a head as Elizabeth, by enactment of Parliament, was constituted to be, and in which capacity exercised supreme authority over the Church of England.

Elizabeth understood full well the scope and purpose of her authority.[1] When the Bishop of Ely (Cox) refused at the command of the queen to alienate certain lands and manors of his see, she wrote:[2]

[1] Cardwell, *Documentary Annals*, ii, 171; Strype, *Life of Grindal*, 290; Lamb, *Historical Account of the Thirty-Nine Articles*; Cardwell, *History of Conferences*, 21, 22, note.

[2] Strickland, *Queens of England*, i, 234.

PROUD PRELATE: You know what you were before I made you what you are. If you do not immediately comply with my request, by G—d I will unfrock you. ELIZABETH.

In her speech to Parliament, 1584, her majesty informed the bishops that if they did not amend their ways she would depose every one of them. "For there seems to have been," says Hallam, "no question in that age but that this might be done by virtue of the crown's supremacy." Prior to this, when the Elizabethan Articles of Religion were sent up for ratification to the House of Lords they were "stayed by commandment from the queen," for the reason that she, and not Parliament, was the head of the Church, and that that method of putting forth the book was an invasion of her prerogative. The primate and bishops petitioned her, says Hardwick, to accelerate the passage of the bill authorizing the publication of the Articles through the House; but their petition was of no avail, "for the queen, immovably resolved to gain what she considered her prerogative, cut short all further 'doings of the Commons' by dissolving Parliament."

The Act of Supremacy also provided that all persons holding office under the crown, civil, military, or ecclesiastical, should take an oath acknowledging the royal supremacy. By this requirement every bond between the Roman Church and the Reformed Church was broken. The hierarchy, which Anglicans affirm had undoubted succession, was destroyed. In

the whole kingdom there were twenty-four episcopal and two archiepiscopal sees. The sees of nine bishops and of one archbishop were vacant. In July, 1559, the remaining bishops and archbishops were summoned by the lords of council and ordered to take the oath; but, with the exception of Kitchin, Bishop of Llandaff, they all refused, and by the end of September they were all deprived of their sees by High Court of Commission.[1] In this manner the Roman sees were emptied of their bishops—a mode quite as legal as that by which the bishops of Edward VI had been deprived in the preceding reign—and there now remained in all England no bishop, except Kitchin, who might lawfully exercise the functions of his office or who could with any assurance transmit the succession.

The archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, the highest in England, being vacant by the death of Cardinal Pole, it was of prime importance that it should be filled as soon as possible by one in harmony with the new order of things in Church and State. For this purpose Queen Elizabeth, according to her royal prerogative, issued a mandate, September 9, 1559, to four of the Roman Catholic bishops, Tonstal of Durham, Bourne of Bath and Wells, Poole of Peterborough, and Kitchin of Llandaff, and to Doctors in Divinity Barlow and

[1] Hallam, *Constitutional History of England*, p. 73; Heylin, *History of the Reformation*.

Scory, who had been ejected from their sees in Mary's reign, commanding them to consecrate Matthew Parker, who was a professor of sacred theology, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Roman bishops refused to obey the mandate. They recognized neither the spiritual authority of the queen nor the episcopal character of Barlow and Scory. The attempt to link by royal authority the new hierarchy on to the old proved an embarrassing failure. But the failure to establish with becoming dignity some sort of a hierarchy was not the worst evil, if evil it was, that shadowed the doubtful birth of that episcopal system which, forgetting its plebeian origin, began in the next reign to assert for itself a divine parentage. By separating from the ancient Church—the treasury of mystical grace—apostolical succession, if there was ever such a thing in the universe, was now made impossible to the newborn Church established by act of Parliament. For, although the newly constituted Church might have consecrated ministers and bishops, yet these servants of the crown could not, on modern Anglican principles, be in possession of the succession, since they had severed themselves in matters of faith and practice from that Church which had given them authority and in which they acknowledged the grace and fact of apostolical succession alone to reside. Otherwise, the Arian, Donatist, and Eutychian bishops, validly ordained, but all rejected as

heretical, would also be in the succession—an absurd doctrine, rejected alike by Romanist and Anglican.[1]

The failure of this commission[2] resulted in the issuance of another mandate, dated December 6, 1559:

Elizabeth, by the grace of God, of England, France, and Ireland queen, defender of the faith, etc., to the Reverend Fathers in Christ, Anthony, Bishop of Llandaff, William Barlow, sometime Bishop of Bath, now elect of Chichester, John Scory, sometime Bishop of Chichester, now elect of Hereford, Miles Coverdale, sometime Bishop of Exeter, John, Suffragan of Bedford, John, Suffragan of Thetford, John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, [commanding them to consecrate Matthew Parker Archbishop of Canterbury] according to the form of the statutes in this behalf set forth and provided; supplying, nevertheless, by our supreme royal authority, of our mere motion and certain knowledge, whatever (either in the things to be done by you pursuant to our aforesaid mandate, or in you, or any of you, your condition, state, or power for the performance of the premises) may or shall be wanting of those things which, either by the statutes of this realm or by the ecclesiastical laws, are required or are necessary on this behalf, the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary.

In obedience to this mandate Matthew Parker, it is said, was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in the chapel at Lambeth House, December 17,

[1] See Augustine, *De Dessidio Donatistarum;* Tertullian, *De Præscriptione Hæreticorum*, c. xx, xxi, xii, xxvi.

[2] Before this mandate was issued there was no little embarrassment how to proceed. Among the State papers of the time is a letter from Parker to Cecil, Elizabeth's secretary, on the margin of which Cecil made some notes. One refers to Edward's Ordinal; and Cecil writes, "This is not established by Parliament." The other relates to the consecration. Cecil notes, "There is no archbishop nor III bishops now to be had; wherefore *quarendum*."

1559, by the persons named, except Kitchin, Bishop of Llandaff, Bale, and the Suffragan of Thetford.

Such were the events leading up to, and such were the means by which, the Anglican hierarchy was established. It originated as we see in the civil power, and on that power was and is dependent for its continuance. "It drew its life from Elizabeth's throne," says the historian Froude, "and had Elizabeth fallen it would have crumbled into sand. . . . The image in its outward aspect could be made to correspond with the parent tree; and to sustain the illusion it was necessary to provide bishops who could appear to have inherited their powers by the approved method as successors of the apostles."

We have seen the authority granted the queen as head of the Church—how she might rule in every affair of the Church directly without intervention of Parliament, or indirectly through commissioners appointed by herself; how by her mere word she could appoint bishops or depose them, and change rites and ceremonies, and even the very prayers that were offered in divine worship. In view of these facts, and considering the religious temper of the time and the avowed opinions of the chief consecrator, what undoubted proof is there that Matthew Parker was truly consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury? That some act of importance to the Church of England occurred at this time we need not doubt; but was it a consecration, or was it an instal-

lation following royal appointment, according to the crown's prerogative as head of the Church? Did the queen really issue a second mandate?

Now, it is a matter of history that this consecration has been questioned, both as to fact and form, by Romanist and Presbyterian, from the time it was first heard of to the present day. Neither Mason's *Vindiciæ* nor Godwin's *Præsulibus*, the efforts of Bramhall, or the editor of Bramhall, with all his ingenuity and learning, has been able to dispel the doubts which first clouded the announcement of the event. The Presbyterians contended that the bishops consecrated by Parker were not true bishops, since he himself was not, and that if such bishops had seats in Parliament they also were entitled to the same. Again, among the official documents between the date of Parker's election by the chapter of Canterbury—which was not a true election—August 1, 1559, and the date given for his consecration, December 17, 1559, there is much confusion and contradiction. While only archbishop elect, Parker himself, in a letter to the council, styles himself archbishop, as if his nomination by the queen in the *congé d'élire* to the chapter and his subsequent election were sufficient. The letters patent, dated December 6, 1559, and which have neither seal nor signature, simply authorize his consecration. But in a royal commission signed by the queen herself —*per ipsam reginam*—dated October 20, 1559, nearly

two months before he was consecrated, the queen addresses him as Archbishop of Canterbury, and this in a legal document granting him certain powers belonging to his office.

What proof is there, then, that Matthew Parker was not archbishop solely by appointment of the queen? Where is the proof in which there is no room for reasonable doubt that he was truly consecrated? To one who adopts the principles of the High Church party, in order to show that these principles are suicidal when applied to the genuineness of their own ministerial orders, it makes little difference whether the fact of Parker's consecration can be proved or not; but to those who really believe the Anglican theory of succession, indubitable proof of the fact is a matter of life or death. Valid ordination and apostolical succession are two things, separate and distinct. The first is no absolute guarantee for the second. Not only must the fact of consecration be undoubtedly established, but it must also be shown that those who consecrated Parker had the authority to consecrate, and also that in continuing the succession they continued it according to the intention and theological teaching of the source whence they received it; otherwise, that which they transmitted, supposing that anything was transmitted at all, was not that which they had received or was intended to be conveyed, but something wholly different, and the succession in their case was certainly lost.

The first evidence offered in proof of Matthew Parker's consecration is the Lambeth register containing the record of the fact. This record, says Haddan, "occupies from the second to the eleventh leaf of Parker's register, vol. i. The volume is an entire volume, bound together before it was used; not a collection of separate documents bound together after they were written." It is, therefore, either the original book in which were recorded the facts related to the consecration at the time they transpired, or it is a book in which were copied the record of the facts from original documents. That it is not a book of copies, but the original record itself, is clearly the fact that Haddan is desirous of proving. That there can be no doubt of this is evident from the statement by Archbishop Wake to Le Courayer:

> You may depend upon it that the whole entry of the acts of M. Parker's consecration, with all the instruments relating to it, in my registers are written in the same hand with the other acts of what passed during his archiepiscopate, and all at the same time they were done.

But what proof is there that this register is itself genuine? Has it been subjected to the test of those principles of literary and historical criticism which, for instance, are applied so rigorously to the New Testament manuscripts and the documents of early Christianity—the epistles of Ignatius, for example? Forgery, it is a well-known fact, was common in the days of Elizabeth; and in the reign

of James I a general pardon was once granted to those who had forged State papers, charters, deeds, etc. Every important document, then, of that period must be accepted with caution by the critic, and such a valuable proof as this register is assumed to be must have some unassailable verification of its genuineness. What is the internal and external evidence in its favor?

The consecration of Matthew Parker took place, it is affirmed, December 17, A. D. 1559. But, notwithstanding the fact that the announcement of the act was challenged and proofs demanded that the act had been performed, this register containing the record of the event was not produced till A. D. 1613, fifty-four years after the alleged act occurred. Among the Romanists, Harding pressed Jewel, one of Parker's bishops, to show the credentials of the new episcopacy. Others, as Sanders, Bristow, and Stapleton, lynx-eyed watchers of everything done by the new *régime*, repeatedly denied the fact of the consecration. But no register was ever produced to prove it; for which reason Romanists and Presbyterians declared that the new bishops were bishops only by appointment of the queen, according to the Act 1st Elizabeth, and referred to them commonly as "Parliament bishops." Where was this register during these fifty-four years? Is it a fact that it is a contemporaneous record of the event upon which the historic episcopate rests? It is

something remarkable that neither Haddan nor Bailey nor any Anglican writer gives any contemporary evidence of its existence. Stow, the friend and *protégé* of Parker, makes no mention of it in his chronological history; Godwin's work on Anglican prelates, published first in English in 1601, knows nothing of it; in fact, no writer or historian of the period mentions it. But in 1613 Mason, chaplain to Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, published his *Vindiciæ*, and then for the first time in fifty-four years this precious, all-essential document triumphantly saw the light. How could such an important volume, by no means small, containing, as Haddan says, the record of "the earliest acts of jurisdiction dated two and three days after Parker's confirmation," drop so completely out of the sight and memory of man so soon after the alleged consecration, notwithstanding the numerous records that were made and were to be made in it, that it could not be appealed to for half a century?

Again, this register was made known for the first time in the reign of James I. It is worthy of note that it was at this time that a general pardon was granted to those who had been guilty of forging public documents, of erasing or interlining rolls, records, briefs, or other documents in that reign or in any preceding reign—strong evidence, apparently, that public documents had been tampered with in royal courts and forged by skillful

hands. In view of this notorious fact the critical inquirer would be justified, it would seem, in asking how it happened that the register was discovered at this particular time, the early part of the reign of James I.

About this time marked changes in political and ecclesiastical opinions began to unfold themselves. The seed sown in other years began to bear astonishing fruit. In the early days of the great Elizabeth, when England was in her life or death struggle with the papacy and all Europe was tossed in the convulsive throes of religious revolution, Presbyterian and Churchman, like true-hearted Englishmen, united against the common enemy. The bloody cruelties of Mary were still fresh in the mind of the nation; the return of papal power, and with it the destruction of the liberties of England, were by no means improbable events; in their theology and views of Church government there was on the whole little, if any, essential difference between the founders of the national Church and the Puritans. Arminianism and Calvinism, Episcopalianism and Presbyterianism were not then deep lines of cleavage in Church or State, the rallying cries, as they afterward became, of powerful parties struggling for supremacy or toleration. But in the closing days of Elizabeth, when England was at comparative peace, and the dominion of Rome was no longer a dread, there was gradually developed a modification of pre-

vious beliefs, a tendency toward readjustment of ecclesiastical relations, an assumption on the part of the national Church of the principles and peerless claims of the discarded Roman supremacy over all other religious sects in the kingdom. The sturdy Reformers who had successfully resisted the teachings of Rome and had delivered England to the freedom of the Gospel were all dead. Their successors leaned more to the doctrines and polity of Rome than to the teachings and simple rites of Geneva. "In their view," says Macaulay, "the episcopal office was essential to the welfare of a Christian society and to the efficacy of the most solemn ordinances of religion. To that office belonged certain high and sacred privileges which no human power could give or take away. A Church might as well be without the doctrine of the Trinity or the doctrine of the Incarnation as without episcopal orders; and the Church of Rome, which in the midst of her corruptions had retained the apostolical orders, was nearer to primitive purity than those Reformed societies which had rashly set up in opposition to the divine model a system invented by men." Such was the new attitude of the Established Church toward other Churches in the kingdom.

King James was considered averse to the principles of the Reformers and in sympathy with those of the Catholics. Before the death of Elizabeth he had intrigued with them for their support, and on his ac-

cession to the throne their hopes revived. The king himself, with his new doctrine of the divine right of kings, asserted the divine right of bishops. "No bishop, no king," was often in his mouth, and for the tenets of Presbyterianism he manifested undisguised hostility. Between Puritanism and prelatism the conflict was intense. The Church flattered the monarch for the support she received, and in her Book of Canons buttressed with spiritual authority his pet theory of passive obedience. Nevertheless, James's study of the fathers and his fond reverence for the usages of antiquity had made him as doubtful of the legitimacy of English episcopal orders as the political situation had increased his prejudice against the Puritans. So distrustful was James of these orders that it is affirmed that he entered into a secret negotiation with the pope and Henry IV of France to introduce real bishops into England, who should remain concealed until the time was ripe. The plan leaked out in London, and James changed his policy. Was not the discovery of this register, then, at this particular time, in the midst of these events, a very providential coincidence?

From testimony adduced by the Rev. Mr. Bailey it would seem still further that, for the preservation of the hierarchy, and the keeping of the Church allied to the throne and the throne to the Church, there was an absolute necessity for the discovery of this register or a like document. Mr. Bailey,

from his collection of records, quotes testimony to the fact that when Sanders's book relating to the Nag's Head fable concerning the consecration of the Elizabethan bishops came to King James "it strattled him:"

> Upon this he [the king] cald his privy council and shewed it them, and withal told 'em that he was a stranger among 'em and knew nothing of the matter; and, directing himself to the archbishop [Abbot], who was present, "My Lord (says he), I hope you can prove and make good your ordination, for by my sol, man (says he), if this story be true we are no Church."

The archbishop replies that by examining the Lambeth register he could produce the record of Parker's consecration. Some time afterward the document is produced—it could have been shown the king the next day, for Mason, the archbishop's chaplain, had already discovered it among some musty papers in the Lambeth Library—and the Earl of Nottingham, perusing it, declared, "It was ye original he saw and read when Archbishop Parker was ordained," fifty-four years before.

But if this record was so easily found at this particular juncture, on the appearance of Sanders's book, why was it not produced, in answer to the repeated demands of those who denied its existence and challenged the validity of the new episcopal orders, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth? Harding, who was contemporary with Parker and Barlow and the others, and, like the rest of his coreligionists, watchful of every public

act, challenged Jewel to show the record of the ordination. "We say to you, Mr. Jewel, and to each of your companions, 'Show us the register of your bishops; show us the letters of your orders.' . . . If you cannot show your bishoply pedigree, if you can prove no succession, then whereby hold you? How can you prove your vocation? By what authority usurp you the administration of doctrine and sacraments? Who hath called you? Who hath laid hands on you? How and by whom were you consecrated?" But no register, no pedigree, was ever forthcoming. Bishop Jewel returned an evasive answer. Not until fifty-four years after the event, when all who participated in it and all who witnessed it were dead except the earl of prodigious memory, was the register produced, and then at a time most providential for the continuity of the hierarchy established by law.

An examination of the register furnishes internal evidence, it is said by those contesting it, sufficient to awaken doubt of its authenticity. It mentions Parker's family as being among the aristocracy. A life of Parker, translated from the *Historiola* of the Masters of Corpus Christi College and published during Parker's lifetime (1574) by one who knew him, states that he was the son of an honest weaver at Norwich. It also affirms that at the consecration the Ordinal of Edward VI was used, which Ordinal at that time was illegal, it not having been restored.

Elizabeth certainly expected that the Roman ritual would be employed in the service, for it cannot be supposed that she thought the Roman bishops to whom she sent her first mandate would use any other. Between the date of that mandate and the date of the consecration no act of Parliament was passed legally restoring the Ordinal which had been outlawed in the preceding reign.

Now, this Ordinal supposes only one consecrator; but the register mentions four. This leads Haddan to remark in a note that "no distinction is made between the presiding bishop and the assistant bishops in this case." But why should these consecrators depart from the Ordinal which they assumed to follow? Is there any attempt here to supply the deficiency in Parker's consecration by making it appear that Barlow was not the only consecrator?

The statement of Haddan that "the volume is an entire volume, bound together before it was used, not a collection of separate documents bound together after they were written," is doubtless designed to suggest the absurdity that such a volume could be forged. Indeed, this defender of Anglican orders is so infallibly certain that forgery was impossible in this instance that one marvels that Queen Elizabeth, or King James, should ever have issued pardons to persons of quality guilty of forging State papers, interlining or erasing rolls, charters, etc.,

access to which in State archives was no doubt as difficult as was access to ecclesiastical registers in episcopal houses.

But if this document is not spurious it bears upon its face the most unfortunate marks of guilt of any document ever depended upon for the support of a great cause. Archbishop Wake, it will be remembered, assured Le Courayer, who was writing in defense of English orders, that everything relating to Parker's consecration in the registers was "written in the same hand with the other acts of what passed during his archiepiscopate, and all at the same time they were done." This is confirmed by others who have examined the register.[1] Now, what are the facts? Anthony Huse, the registrar, died in June, 1560, and was succeeded by John Incent. Huse is registrar to folio 221, John Incent from that to folio 299. The handwriting, then, ought to be different. But it is not. The very uniformity upon which Mr. Haddan relies is evidence against him. Or are we to believe that Anthony Huse wrote in the same hand the whole of this register after his death? for, as Archbishop Wake testifies, the writing is in the same hand and was done at the time of the events recorded. Again, in the *acta* of confirmation in this same register, as printed by Haddan, Francis Clarke acts as scribe in the absence of Anthony

[1] Notably Canon Williams, to whose researches in this particular matter we are under obligation.

Huse. The writing in this instance also should be different. But it is not.

The crowning proof that that part of the register recording Parker's consecration is a probable forgery is seen in the fatal blunder of whoever wrote it in failing to keep correct time. In Haddan's Latin copy before us we read:

> The register of the most reverend father in Christ, his lordship Matthew Parker, elected Archbishop of Canterbury, and confirmed by the reverend fathers their lordships William Barlow, lately Bishop of Bath and Wells, now elect [*nunc electum*] of Chichester, John Scory, formerly Bishop of Chichester, now elect [*nunc electum*] of Hereford, . . . likewise consecrated by the same reverend fathers, under the same authority, on the seventeenth day of the same month of December, Anthony Huse, Esquire, being then the chief registrar [*tunc registrario primario*] of the said most reverend father.

How can Anglican defenders of the register reconcile these different times and make them one and the same time? Astounding as it may be, here is an attempt to make it appear that this record was made at the time the event it records occurred——"Now" (*nunc*)—while the fact drops out at the end that it was not written until some time after—"Then" (*tunc*)—that is, after Huse had ceased to be registrar! And, as one of our authorities shows, the "now" comprised three days only, for Parker was consecrated December 17, and on the twentieth of the same month Barlow and Scory were confirmed in their sees and were no longer elect, but absolute, Bishops of Chichester and Hereford. Of these

facts, visible on the face of the register itself, Anglican learning and ingenuity have offered no explanation. "*Nemo dat quod non habet.*" There is no explanation that does not obscure the High Church theory, and the whole elaborate scheme of evidence supporting the erroneous view of the historic episcopate, in ever-thickening, darkening doubt.

The royal historiographer,[1] Rymer, compiled all State papers of the period in one great work, entitled *Fœdera, Conventiones, Literæ, et cujuscumque Generis Acta Publica*, etc., giving to each paper copied the identical authentication possessed by the original. Those mandates, royal letters patent, etc., that bore the great seal are marked by Rymer "*Sub magno sigillo Angliæ;*" others are attested under the privy seal with the words "*Teste rege;*" some others are signed by the queen in person, and in Rymer all such have the conclusion "*Teste regina*," etc., or "*Per ipsam reginam.*" The common formula, "*Teste rege*," on many papers is without special value unless followed by seal or signature. Now, the first mandate for the consecration of Parker, dated September 9, 1559, but which was disregarded, bears a proper authentication, "*Teste regina, per breve de privato sigillo.*" The second mandate, dated December 6, 1559, is the one under which it is af-

[1] Canon Williams, *Anglican Orders;* Haddan, *Apostolic Succession;* and Mr. Bailey, *Defense of Holy Orders.*

firmed Parker was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. What is the authentication? None! There is no seal, no signature. It is very strange and very unfortunate that this particular document in this particular case should be without any evidence of royal authority. Those who deny its genuineness are of the opinion that Elizabeth, chagrined at the failure of her first mandate, was too high-spirited to issue another when by a mere word, according to the teachings of the Reformers in Edward VI's time, and of her own appointment, it was lawful to make one a bishop or an archbishop. What validity such an argument has we will not stop to inquire; but the following evidence is given by those who make it. In Rymer (xv, 546) there is a royal commission, properly authenticated, authorizing certain ones to administer the oath of supremacy to Matthew Parker. The document is genuine. What is its date? October 20, 1559. Here, then, in this very commission—nearly two months before the date of the royal mandate of December 6, 1559, issued, it is said, for his consecration—the queen herself in a legal document styles him archbishop. Was he then archbishop? Mr. Bailey urges the fact that Barlow must have been consecrated bishop, because he was once so styled by Queen Mary; "therefore, from this very fact it must be admitted that he had been truly consecrated bishop and publicly accepted as such by the queen." He quotes Le Courayer at length to

the same effect. Prior to December 17, 1559, Matthew Parker is styled archbishop in a legal document by the queen, in which document he is granted certain powers which he could not use were he not archbishop; therefore, we might say with Mr. Bailey, "from this very fact it must be admitted" that he was archbishop before that date, archbishop by royal authority, and as such accepted by the founders of the hierarchy in those "spacious times of great Elizabeth."

Matthew Parker may have been consecrated archbishop, although the mandate for his consecration is without seal or signature; he may have been consecrated, although the queen by prerogative of royal supremacy could have made him archbishop without consecration, "the state of the time and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary;" he may have, notwithstanding many other things, been consecrated by the persons named, and in the manner indicated—but Parker's register alone will never prove the fact.

What other proof, then, is relied upon to corroborate Parker's register? There are several relied upon by Mr. Haddan, such as Parker's diary and a diary kept by a Mr. Machyn, a merchant in London, who says, "The xxiii day of June [1559] were elected vi neew byshopes com from beyond the see, master Parker," etc.—a statement which is not true, for Parker did not retire to the Continent, as did many

others, on the accession of Mary. The chief support, however, is derived from the *Zurich Letters.*

Between the Reformers in England and those on the Continent a correspondence was maintained, which correspondence, known as the *Zurich Letters*, has been published by the Parker Society. High Church writers regard this correspondence as closing the case against all objectors. Haddan says: "These letters prove in detail, with the conclusiveness of undesigned, private, and casual allusions, the several consecrations of the bishops, including Parker." It cannot be denied, nor is there any necessity for denying the fact, that the *Zurich Letters* furnish strong, if not conclusive, evidence that Parker was made archbishop. That he was was never doubted. The manner, the how he was made so, is the *pièce de résistance;* and the evidence is just as strong for the belief that he was archbishop by royal authority only, as others had been made bishops, for whose special benefit the Act 8th Elizabeth was passed confirming them in their appointment. This correspondence, so confidently appealed to by Anglicans, is not without its difficulties also, if these same Anglicans, between whose views and the teachings of the Reformers there is no agreement at all, would but seriously consider them.

Mr. Bailey gives one of these letters, from Jewel to Peter Martyr, dated at London, July 20, 1559, in which Jewel writes, "Some of our friends are

marked out for bishops, Parker for Canterbury," etc. But there is another letter from Jewel to Peter Martyr which Mr. Bailey does not give. It reads, "Yesterday, as soon as I returned to London, I heard from the Archbishop of Canterbury that you are invited hither, and that your old lectureship is open to you." What is the date of this letter? November 2, 1559, six weeks before Parker's alleged consecration and two weeks after he had been styled archbishop by the queen in a legal document. Mr. Bailey quotes another letter. It is from Parkhurst to Josiah Simler, dated "Bishop's Cleeve, December 20, 1559," and reads, "When I was lately in London one of the privy councilors and Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury," etc. Bishop's Cleeve is in Gloucestershire. Now, when we reflect upon the distance and the mode of travel in those easy days, it is clear as sunbeams that Parkhurst left London before December 17, the date of Parker's consecration, and that, therefore, as the queen had styled him, and as the letter from Jewel to Peter Martyr had styled him, Parker was archbishop before December 17. Or will Anglicans assume that the elevation of Matthew Parker was so certain that he was regarded already as archbishop? In any court the simple response would be, "Prove it." There is other testimony to the probability that bishops were made by royal designation only, as, for instance, the petition of Parker, Cox, Grindal,

Scory, and Barlow that Elizabeth should accept certain revenues from their sees. These worthy prelates were not confirmed, it will be remembered, until after the consecration of Parker. But this petition was not presented, according to Strype (*Annals*, chap. vi), later than September, 1559. How, then, could these gentlemen give away the revenues of sees they did not possess and over which they had no jurisdiction? The explanation is that they were recognized as bishops as soon as nominated by the royal prerogative, and nothing further was considered necessary.

Not pursuing this interesting sidepath further, the important questions press to the front, Who were Parker's consecrators? and, secondly, Did they hold to what is now known as Anglican belief concerning ministerial orders? If the Reformers were not High Church men, representing such belief in the Church in the name of which they consecrated Matthew Parker, if they did not believe in the necessity of episcopal ordination at all, but recognized freely the ministerial character of ministers in other Churches not possessing or indorsing episcopal ordination—all of which are facts of history—then it is simply impossible to find in the Church of England by law established any intelligible basis for the notion of an historic episcopate which is now made a fundamental condition of ecclesiastical union.

CHAPTER III.

Founders of the Hierarchy.

FROM the consecration we turn to the consecrators. The bishops who consecrated Matthew Parker were, according to the register, William Barlow, John Scory, Miles Coverdale, and John Hodgkins. Now, from our assumed position of apostolical succession, we may inquire, What authority did these ministers possess to consecrate an archbishop? Were they themselves really bishops? Were they canonically ordained? Is there no doubt whatever attached to their orders? Would men of their avowed beliefs be ordained now by any bishop in the Church of England or in the Protestant Episcopal denomination?

On scriptural grounds and on the rights inherent in the Church we may readily acknowledge their authority. But High Church writers do not appeal to Holy Scripture; their appeal is to the power of orders received in uninterrupted succession. By this doctrine, then, it is truly just that we should test the orders of Parker's consecrators and conclude if there is no doubt shadowing their orders, that Matthew Parker may have been an archbishop, though it will by no means follow that therefore apostolical succes-

sion was continued in the Church of England. On the other hand, if any doubt rests upon the validity of their orders, the historic episcopate among the Anglicans is nothing more than an empty phrase.

Now, that there were grave doubts concerning the authority of some or all of these consecrators is sufficiently evident from the famous supplying clause in the mandate commanding them to consecrate Dr. Parker:

> Supplying, nevertheless, by our supreme royal authority, of our mere motion and certain knowledge, whatever (either in the things to be done by you pursuant to our aforesaid mandate, or in you, or any of you, your condition, state, or power for the performance of the premises) may or shall be wanting of those things which, either by the statutes of this realm or by the ecclesiastical laws, are required or are necessary on this behalf, the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary.

And here we may observe that this clause refutes beyond all question the plea that Elizabeth's supremacy was only of a civil character. The queen, as sovereign of England, does not simply permit the consecration to take place within her dominions, but, as head of the Church, enters the spiritual domain of the Church and by her authority dispenses with all disabilities, and supplies whatever is wanting for any cause in the power of these consecrators. As in part of Henry VIII's reign and in that of Edward VI, the power of the bishops had its source in the crown. "On the accession of Edward VI,"

says Froude,[1] "the bishops of the realm were to regard themselves as possessed of no authority independent of the crown. They were not successors of the apostles, but merely ordinary officials. Cranmer set the willing example in an acknowledgment that all jurisdiction, ecclesiastical as well as secular, within the realm only emanated from the sovereign."

To return to the main question. If there were no apprehensions of illegality, if there were no doubts, it is difficult to understand the necessity for this extraordinary, unprecedented, and most comprehensive exercise of the royal supremacy. Anglican writers feel the weight of this testimony, and, anxious to dispel the doubts in the case of Barlow and his assistants, they endeavor by every ingenuity of argument to break the force of it. Mr. Haddan attempts to dispose of it by the offhand remark that "that clause, it seems hardly necessary to say, referred, by the nature of the case, to possible legal defects, and to those only, and among others [what others?] to the very cavils advanced just afterward by Bonner." But strong assertion is no substitute for proof. The clause itself is sufficient refutation of Haddan's rash statement, for it refers not only to legal disabilities of a civil nature, but expressly bears upon the personal "condition, state, or power," wanting in the

[1] *History of England*, vol. v, American ed. See also Burnet, *Collection of Records*, number 2, where the commission is given in full. Thus, we see, by law, and not by spiritual authority emanating from the Church, was the hierarchy established.

consecrators, but required "either by the statutes of this realm or by the ecclesiastical laws." Did these men have authority under existing civil laws to ordain? It matters not; this comprehensive clause supplies the authority. But did they have authority to perform that act under existing ecclesiastical laws? It matters not; this supplying clause covers that defect also. The truth is that, if they were not bishops at all, there is nothing in the mandate or in this supplying clause that would prohibit them from performing the episcopal function of ordination; but, on the contrary, it is expressly and minutely declared that any defect, of any character whatever, arising from any want of power whatever in state or condition, is supplied by "supreme royal authority," "the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary."

Mr. Haddan's other claim, that the clause in question referred to certain cavils, and among others to those advanced "just afterward by Bonner," is very sweeping; but, on examination, it in no manner establishes his contention. Bishop Bonner was in prison in 1563, and refused, when Bishop Horne, of Winchester, presented him the oath, to acknowledge the queen's supremacy or to recognize the episcopal character of Horne, on the ground that, as was alleged, he was ordained by King Edward's Ordinal, which, having been abrogated by 1st Mary, sess. 2, c. 2, had not been expressly restored by act of Parlia-

ment, and that, therefore, he was not legally a bishop. Bonner held his ground, and Horne could do nothing with him. There was evident fear to test the validity of the recent ordinations. But Mr. Haddan endeavors to make it appear that the only reason for not contesting Bonner's answer was purely a civil law reason. He says, "This objection was regarded by the lawyers as so strong legally that, on the one hand, Bonner's case was not allowed to come to an issue," etc. But let us go back a little. The commission containing the supplying clause was written December 6, 1559, four years before Bonner's cavils astonished the lawyers. It was, when written, submitted by the queen to the highest legal authorities in England, "divers doctors of both faculties," who declared and recorded their opinion:

That by this commission in this forme pennid as well as the Queene's Majestie may lawfully auctorize the p'sons within namid to the effects specified as the said p'sons maye exercise the acte of confirminge and consecratinge in the same to them committid.

Will'am Maye,	Henry Harvey,
Robert Weston,	Thomas Yall,
Edward Leedes,	Nicholas Bullingham.

Now, is it not a little remarkable that a judicial declaration of the highest importance of six eminent lawyers of canon and civil law, affirming a certain royal writ to be lawful—which writ, by the mere authority of the queen, vested in her by Parliament, was in itself lawful—should be utterly set aside by

one man, not a lawyer, as unlawful? Is it not very singular that these jurists did not know the acts of Parliament passed at that time, or that they did not know that the supplying clause and the royal supremacy supplied, according to intent and letter, every possible defect in law, and that, therefore, Bonner had no defense before the law? Does it not really border on the marvelous, if they did not know these things, that they should have declared the queen's mandate with this clause to have been lawful; and that, if they did not know these simple and elementary facts, they nevertheless, these crown lawyers, only four years afterward should consider Bonner's legal objections to be "so strong" that they could not bring him to trial?

Haddan's attempt to divert attention from the real purpose of the supplying clause, and to make it appear that astute and learned lawyers, with all the support of the crown at their back, were turned down by the legal cavilings of a prisoner, cannot be considered a masterful piece of reasoning. If this clause was not lawful or authoritative in respect to this matter, in what other respect was it or could it have been lawful and finally authoritative? What was the supplying clause for? Moreover, Mr. Haddan's argument makes the power of the royal supremacy to be no power, and the supremacy itself to be no supremacy, for the reason that the strongest document that the crown could draw up was of no

avail, could not give authority or supply defects, although crown lawyers decreed that it could. The argument is, also, suicidal; for if Bonner's objections were so strong legally that he could not be brought to trial, how could this supplying clause relieve Parker's consecrators of ecclesiastical disabilities? Could Bonner make no cavil on the side of canon law as strong as the objection he did make from the standpoint of civil law? The truth in the case is, there were doubts concerning the ecclesiastical ability of the consecrators to perform the act of consecration, and these doubts were more to be feared if discussed openly than the legal technicalities of Bonner; for Bishop Horne was not the only personage in the kingdom who could offer him the oath on the royal supremacy. Queen Elizabeth herself, if we may rely on the author of that standard work, *The Queens of England*,[1] was by no means free from doubt, and seemed to have remained doubtful of the genuineness of the hierarchy she had created. Quoting Lady Southwell on the last days of Elizabeth, she says:

> When she was near her end the council sent to her the Archbishop of Canterbury and other prelates, at the sight of which she was much offended, cholerically rating them, bidding them "be packing," saying she was no atheist, but she knew full well they were but hedge priests.

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[1] Miss Strickland, vii, p. 223. See also Froude, *History of England*, p. 568: "She called them doctors, as the highest title to which she considered them to have any right."

When we consider the chaotic condition of religious opinion in those stirring days of the Reformation it is not surprising that there should have been grave doubts among all classes concerning the genuineness of the new priesthood. The conflict between Romanism and Protestantism was at its highest; it was difficult to shake off the influence of centuries of teaching relative to the priesthood and the powers of episcopacy; confusion in the beliefs of the Reformers themselves was as the discordant sounds of jangling bells; between the Roman views of the queen concerning the ministry and the Genevan tenets of some of her leading bishops there was little harmony, all of which is painfully manifest in the correspondence carried on between the Reformers in England and their brethren in Germany and Switzerland.

From the "Order of Rites and Ceremonies," in Parker's register, we learn that William Barlow was the presiding bishop, and was in fact and theory the chief consecrator.

The gospels at length finished, the elect of Hereford, the Suffragan of Bedford, and Miles Coverdale, of whom above, conducted the archbishop before the elect of Chichester [Barlow], seated in a chair at the table, with these words:

> Reverend father in God, we offer and present to you this pious and learned man, that he may be consecrated archbishop.

Mr. Haddan remarks in a footnote, "It will be

observed that no distinction is made between the presiding bishop and the assistant bishops." The purpose of the statement, and also of the register, is to bring out the fact that all four laid hands on Parker and that they were, therefore, all equally consecrators. We cannot escape the conviction that this is an afterthought and is not according to facts. There never was a record like it, before or since. The register states that the Ordinal of Edward VI was used; and yet in this important particular these bishops, without any reason, depart from the Ordinal, from the usage of ages in every land, from the immemorial usage in England, and devise a method of their own, unknown in any Church in any age, and one that is unauthorized by any law, civil or canonical. From that day to this there has not been an ordination like it, and there never was one before it. He who wrote this part of the register seems to have balanced between the fact of Barlow's being the consecrator and the less harmful alternative that all four were equal in the ordination. But we do not believe that these bishops disregarded the Edwardine Ordinal without cause and invented a method of their own. The register comes near enough to the facts to show that William Barlow was the presiding bishop, which would put him in place of a chief consecrator, for a presiding bishop is not to keep order or to be a master of ceremonies; and to him the others presented Parker for consecration accord-

ing to the Ordinal, which orders that after the gospel and *credo* are ended the elected bishop or archbishop "shall be presented . . . to the archbishop, or to some other bishop appointed by his commission, the bishops presenting saying," etc. The bishop or archbishop then submits certain questions and receives response. "Then the archbishop and bishops present shall lay their hands upon the head of the elect bishop, the archbishop saying," etc. The belief that Barlow filled this office is supported also by the fact, adduced by Canon Estcourt, that among the Fox manuscripts in the British Museum is a document which he places alongside the Parker register, and which distinctly states that William Barlow was the consecrating bishop.

But when was William Barlow himself ever consecrated bishop? Where? By whom?

> Barlow on Parker his hands he laid,
> But who laid hands on him?

It is when an attempt is made to answer these vital questions that the reason for denying the chief place to Bishop Barlow in transmitting the grace of apostolical succession is made manifest.

The Rev. Mr. Bailey produces copies of all the documents relating to the episcopacy of Barlow, and on these we suppose we may confidently rely, since he relies upon them in his defense of the validity of Anglican orders. What then are the historical facts?

William Barlow in the reign of Henry VIII was

prior of the monastery of Bisham, of the order of St. Augustine. A faithful servant of the king, his usefulness to Henry in his conflict with Rome was no doubt agreeable to his religious convictions. As to his views of ministerial orders, they were exceeding loose, and would most surely be abhorred now by High Church apologists, who are very willing, nevertheless, to profit by his acts. In 1536–7 he was complained of to the king's council for declaring "that wheresoever two or three simple persons, as two cobblers or weavers, were in company and elected in the name of God, there was the true Church of God;" also, "that if the king's grace, being supreme head of the Church in England, did choose, denominate, and elect any layman to be a bishop, that he so chosen should be as good a bishop as he is, or the best in England." In answer to certain questions of Cranmer, as we shall see, he held that bishops have no authority to ordain except it be given by the king; that consecration is unnecessary and appointment only is sufficient; and that bishops and priests at the beginning were all one. Anglicans seem to have good reason for their dislike of Barlow as consecrator of Parker.

In 1534, October 3, under the title of "Mr. Barlo, Prior of Bisham," he was sent by Henry VIII on an embassy to King James V of Scotland. The episcopal see of St. Asaph becoming vacant by the death of its bishop, King Henry issued a *congé d'élire*

on the 7th of January, 1536, present style, in favor of Barlow, and on the sixteenth of the same month he was elected to that see. The temporalities of the diocese were granted him February 2, same year, and the royal assent, peculiarly worded, was given February 22 for his consecration. But no mandate for his consecration is anywhere to be found, if such a commission was ever issued.[1] During this time Barlow was in Scotland, where he had been sent on a second embassy. In proof of this, letters among State papers in the public record office are put in evidence.

It will be observed that up to this date Barlow is only bishop elect of St. Asaph, not consecrated.

On February 18, same year (1536), Richard Rawlins, Bishop of St. David's, died. Mr. Bailey says:

> Into his place Barlow was substituted with such great haste that on the tenth of the following April his election by the precentor and chapter of St. David's was completed,[2] and his confirmation took place on the twenty-first.

Up to this date, then, he is neither consecrated Bishop of St. Asaph, to which he was first elected, nor of St. David's, to which he has now been elected and confirmed. But a strange thing now makes its

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[1] "The temporalities of the see were restored February 2, 1535–6 (Wood, Athen. Oxon.), and he was confirmed by proxy either February 22 or 23; for the archbishop's commission to confirm is dated February 22, and the certificate to the king of the confirmation February 23 of the same year (*Cranmer's Register*, 188a, 211a); but no mandate to consecrate is to be found—merely the royal assent."—*Bailey*, p. 69.

[2] *Cranmer's Register.*

appearance and shows how lightly Cranmer himself esteemed canonical ordination. In the certificate of Barlow's confirmation to this see of St. David's returned by Cranmer, and found in his register (fol. 205), as given by Bailey, Barlow is absolutely styled full Bishop of St. Asaph: "Whereas we have confirmed the election lately made of the reverend father, the Lord William Barlowe, lately Bishop of St. Asaph."

Was it at this point that Barlow's usurpation of episcopacy began? Here in a legal document he is declared by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, to be a bishop, and his see is named, when as a matter of history he has so far never been consecrated at all. This fact is further proved, if further proof were necessary, from a royal writ, dated May 29, 1536, granting a *congé d'élire* for a bishop to the "see of St. Asaph, now destitute of the solace of a pastor by the free translation of William Barlowe, last bishop elect of the same," and also by the mandate to consecrate Robert Wharton to the bishopric of St. Asaph, "lately vacant by the free translation of William Barlowe, last bishop elect of the same."

Barlow is now, April 21, 1536, confirmed to the see of St. David's. On the twenty-fifth of that month the temporalities of the bishopric are turned over to him by royal writ, "certain causes and considerations us specially moving," and on the twenty-seventh he is summoned to the House of Lords as

actual bishop. But when and where was he consecrated? Who were his consecrators?

To these questions, which are the only questions of any importance in this case, there is no answer. On the other hand, the deeper we investigate the darker the subject becomes, and we walk among shadows, dealing with misrepresentations and troublesome evasions. For instance, Barlow, in his documents for St. David's, calls himself Bishop of St. Asaph. But Haddan, who strains every point in his favor, is forced by the evidence to admit that "the documents relating to his successor at St. Asaph, dated in May, June, and July, 1536, seem to exclude the possibility of his having been consecrated to that see; as they, on the one hand, speak of him throughout as merely *episcopus Assavensis electus*, and, on the other, they describe the vacancy as occurring—not by his 'translation,' as if he had been a consecrated bishop—*per cessionem, dimissionem, seu transmutationem dni. W. Barlowe episcopi ibidem electi;* as though the registrars had been at a loss for a term to describe the transference from one see to another of a person simply confirmed to the first, but not consecrated."

To the see of St. David's, then, he comes as a consecrated bishop, and is ever afterward supposed to be such, and is accepted as such, when, as a matter of fact, there is no evidence that he was ever consecrated at all, but every particle of proof tending to

demonstrate the opposite. He was bishop solely by King Henry's appointment. Any number of promotions, translations, or summonses to Parliament after this assumption of the episcopal office prove nothing as to the essential fact of consecration. Nor is it anything to the point that he exercised his office under Edward VI, or that he was deprived by Queen Mary, or that he was again recognized under Queen Elizabeth. For it is not likely that, having been described in State papers and royal writs under Henry as bishop, any attempt would be made by those who cared as little as himself about the validity of orders to contest the record. Francis Mason's efforts, also, to clear away the doubts that settle down, like a heavy fog, on Barlow's ordination serve only to confirm one in the belief that such labor is in very truth a hopeless task. In speaking of the temporalities being granted Barlow on his entrance to the see of St. David's, he says:

> If he had not as yet received episcopal consecration he would not have been capable of this benefice, nor would he have been able to receive this priory in his own name and those of his successors.

Mason regarded this as strong proof that Barlow must have been ordained, and Anglican writers make the most of it possible. But, nevertheless, like many other such proofs, its real worthlessness is made manifest when unimpeachable evidence from royal writs and State papers of

various kinds is produced showing without any doubt that, whether he could or could not legally, had the truth been known and the law enforced, have received the temporalities, he did receive the temporalities of the see of St. Asaph before he was consecrated. For we have seen from the documents that they were restored to him February 2, 1536, at which date he was not even confirmed to the see, to say nothing of being consecrated. Therefore, what could have been done, and was done, by royal authority, whether right or wrong, could have been done by the same authority with reference to the priory of Bisham or the temporalities of St. David's. The evidence in the case, when summed up, leads to no other conclusion than that William Barlow, the ordainer of Archbishop Parker, was himself never ordained to the episcopal office.

The episcopal character of Barlow's assistants, Dr. Scory, Miles Coverdale, and John Hodgkins, need not detain us. Hodgkins was only a suffragan bishop; and if we do not emphasize the statement of the celebrated Field, in his *Book of the Church*, that in the early Church suffragans were not allowed to meddle with ordination, it is that we may call attention to a matter of more importance. A suffragan has no authority or jurisdiction except what is given him by the bishop or archbishop. Hodgkins was suffragan in title only, not in reality; hence he could give no jurisdiction to one who was to be

his chief and from whom he himself must derive his authority. To this it will be answered that he had been suffragan bishop but had been deprived under Mary. But if it was lawful for Elizabeth to deprive bishops of their sees, was it not also lawful for Mary?

Doctor Scory and Miles Coverdale were raised to the episcopacy in the chaotic days of Edward VI. Their ordination was by Archbishop Cranmer, assisted by Bishop Ridley[1] and Hodgkins, Suffragan of Bedford, and according to the Edwardine Ordinal. Now, it is well known that that Ordinal recognized no distinction in order between a bishop and a presbyter. This is acknowledged by Bishop Burnet, who says that in that Ordinal there was "no express mention made in the words in ordaining them that it was for one or the other office." Further, we know that Cranmer, who ordained these consecrators of Parker, did not himself believe in three distinct orders, or that ordination was absolutely necessary. What opinion, then, can defenders of the Anglican claims have of the consecration of Scory and Coverdale? Did they receive from Cranmer the grace of apostolical succession? Did he or the martyr Ridley intend to convey such grace? Such, then, are the doubts that shroud the episcopal character of the consecrators of Matthew Parker.

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[1] Fox relates in his *Book of Martyrs* that when Bishops Latimer and Ridley were executed the Roman Bishop of Gloucester declared them degraded from the priesthood, not from the episcopacy.

CHAPTER IV.

The Doctrine of Orders in the Anglican Ordinal.

THE Reformers who founded the Church of England did not revolt simply against the tyranny and usurpations of Rome; but deeper than any question of aggression or of papal supremacy was the conviction that the Church of Rome, in its awful corruption of faith and morals, had become the Antichrist. To them it was the scarlet woman of Revelation, the mother of harlots, the sink of all spiritual abomination. Hence the Reformation in England was designed to be, not a protest merely against papal power, but a cleansing of the temple of God; and, in the furtherance of this, all doctrines, rites, and ceremonies in which the spirit of Romanism was infused, or which would be interpreted as retaining any of the doctrinal ideas peculiar to the Roman Church, were rejected as rapidly as circumstances would permit, with all the grosser superstitions fostered by that Church to the scandal of Christian truth.

Among the divine offices to be reformed was the giving of holy orders. In November, 1550, a bill for the form of ordaining ministers was introduced in the House of Lords and agreed to, the Roman

Bishops of Durham, Carlisle, Worcester, Chichester, and Westminster dissenting. They well knew that the reform contemplated meant an utter rejection of the doctrine of orders as held by Rome, and a Protestantizing of the ministry—that is, a new institution of the ministry on purely evangelical principles. The substance of the bill was that six prelates and six theologians, to be named by the king and authorized by a warrant under the great seal, should draw up a form of ordination, and that that form should be the only one used after the following April. The commission was appointed. There were several rituals in use, the old Sarum pontifical, the rituals of Lincoln and of York; but these were set aside, for the reason that a ministry of an entirely different character from that in the ordination of which those rituals had been used was designed, and a new ritual was devised, presented to Parliament, and adopted. That ritual was known as the Ordinal of Edward VI, and was used by the Church of England in the ordination of her ministers from 1549 till 1662, a space of one hundred and thirteen years. That Ordinal is the ritual used from the beginning, with a few changes, chiefly abbreviations, by the Methodist Episcopal Church in the ordination of her bishops, presbyters, and deacons. It is anti-sacerdotal, and knows nothing of a mystical, transmitted grace or of three orders in the ministry by divine enactment.

It is our purpose, then, to show that the ritual of the Church of England, before that ritual was changed in 1662 to its present form, is a standing witness against the present Anglican theory of the historic episcopate—first, in that it neither confers nor recognizes a priestly character in those ordained; and, secondly, that it abolishes all distinctions of order between presbyter and bishop by divine injunction. It is necessary to do this, for, notwithstanding the changes made in the Ordinal by convocation in 1662, an earnest effort is made to make it appear that the doctrine of orders in the Church of England during the Reformation, when that Church was organized, is identical with the High Church views held now; that its ministers were really ordained priests; that a mystical, sacerdotal grace was believed to be conferred in ordination; that there were three distinct orders in the Christian ministry; and that episcopal ordination was considered essential to valid ministerial functions. This position, unhistorical as it is, Anglicans are compelled by their Romish principles to assume. For it is evident that if this was not the explicit teaching of the Church of England at its establishment; if its founders did not believe in three distinct orders *jure divino;* if they did not believe that any sacramental grace or mystical character was impressed or conferred in ordination—if, in one word, the Reformers who founded the Church of England did not hold the Roman Catholic doctrine of orders,

minus papal supremacy, now maintained by High Anglicans—then all claims to an historic episcopate in the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church are without foundation, and the ministry in those Churches have no better credentials to show than have the ministry of other Churches, and their claims to apostolical succession are wholly groundless except in the same sense claimed by other Churches.

The radical difference intended by the Reformers between the old ministry and the new can be fully comprehended, not only by what they put into the new ritual for the ordination of ministers, but also by what they purposely left out. They were men versed in the writings of the fathers, in ecclesiastical history, in theology, in the originals of the Holy Scriptures, and certainly were thoroughly acquainted with the Roman pontifical and the forms of ordination employed in the ancient diocesan sees of England. It is therefore very singular that the Reformers, if they believed in the theories now advocated by Anglicans, should deliberately reject these old Ordinals, eliminate everything savoring of the old ideas relating to the ministry, and should devise an Ordinal of their own, which was so thoroughly opposed to anything like priesthood, sacramental grace, and uninterrupted succession that that same Ordinal, with a change here and there, and abbreviated as to the prayers, could be

adopted and is used by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

We have said that the founders of the English Church rejected the ancient Ordinals; but the new Ordinal was based upon them all, omitting, as stated, the distinctive features of the old clerical character. This will be seen on consideration of the following.

In the Roman pontifical for the ordaining of presbyters we read: "For it behooveth a priest [*sacerdotem*] to offer, to bless, or consecrate [*benedicere*], to preside, to preach, to baptize." In Edward's Ordinal there is nothing of this, but instead a godly admonition to be messengers, pastors, stewards of the Lord, to teach, premonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family. In the pontifical there is prayer for the mystical grace of priesthood, and distinct reference to it is constantly made: "Pour upon these thy servants the benediction of the Holy Ghost, and the virtue of priestly grace [*et gratiæ sacerdotalis infunde virtutem*];" and again, "Whence the priestly degrees and Levitical offices by mystical sacraments grew up." "In like manner in the wilderness thou didst propagate the spirit that was in Moses into the minds of seventy prudent men." "So also thou didst transfuse into Eleazar and Ithamar, the sons of Aaron, abundance of the fullness that was in their father." In the ordaining are these words: "Receive thou power to offer sacrifice to God, and to celebrate masses both for the living and the dead. In the

name," etc. Nothing of this is to be found in the Edwardine Ordinal. We have there simply, "Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins thou dost forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain they are retained; and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of his holy sacraments. In the name," etc. And, "Take thou authority to preach the word of God, and to minister the holy sacraments in the congregation." The Reformers knew that the idea of priesthood was foreign to the New Testament, that never in one single instance did the apostles call themselves priests or designate any minister as such; and therefore that idea and its associations were rejected by them in the devising of the Ordinal.

The unfortunate word "priest," however, was retained, as well as "presbyter;" but the word gave offense to many of the best minds. Hooker wrote: "In truth, the word 'presbyter' doth seem more fit, and in propriety of speech more agreeable, than 'priest' with the drift of the whole Gospel of Jesus Christ;" and "What better title could then be given than the reverend name of presbyters, or fatherly guides? The Holy Ghost throughout the body of the New Testament, making so much mention of them, doth not anywhere call them priests."[1]

The views and intentions of the Reformers concerning the new ministry may now be considered

[1] *Ecclesiastical Polity*, v, 78.

further, in an examination of the second statement that the Ordinal does not recognize three orders by divine right.

Mr. Bailey begins his defense of holy orders in the Church of England by quoting the Preface to the Ordinal, published 1549:

> It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors that, from the apostles' time, there hath been these three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—bishops, priests, and deacons.

Triumphantly is this declaration paraded by High Churchmen as evidence that the Reformed ministry of the Established Church was founded upon belief in the historic episcopate. But, if this statement is proof of that fact, Calvin himself, who so vigorously opposed episcopacy, must be credited with the same belief when, in his *Institutes*,[1] he gives the origin of bishops and quotes Jerome. The real matter at issue is not whether these Reformers believed in episcopacy, but whether they believed in bishops by divine right as distinct from, and superior to, presbyters. Now, while the authors of the Ordinal recognized episcopal form of government to have been conformable to Holy Scripture and of ancient custom, as did also the founders of the Methodist Episcopal Church in council assembled 1784–5, yet they nowhere assert these three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons to be three separate and distinct orders.

[1] Book iv, chap. iv, 2.

The Ordinal itself is testimony to this, for the same lessons read in the ordination of a presbyter were read in the consecration of a bishop. A careful consideration of these lessons will reveal clearly the views held by those who framed this ritual:

ORDERING OF PRIESTS (PRESBYTERS).

Ordinal of 1549.	*Ordinal as changed* 1662.
Acts xx, 17–35. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers [bishops], to feed the Church of God," etc.	4. Eph. iv, 7–13. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, pastors," etc.
1 Tim. iii, 1–16. "This is a true saying, If any man desireth the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless," etc.	7. Matt. ix, 36–38. "When Jesus saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered," etc.
Matt. xxviii, 18–20. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore," etc.	9. John x, 1–16.
John x, 1–16.	
John xx, 19–23. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you," etc.	
"Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins thou dost," etc.	14. "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed," etc.

In 1662, when episcopacy in the Church of England was for the first time made indispensable to a valid ministry, the lessons which were read in the

ordination of a presbyter, and which spoke of presbyters as being bishops, were used exclusively in the ordination of bishops, and the lessons from the Epistle to the Ephesians and from Matthew's gospel (ix, 36–38) substituted in their place, as has been shown in the preceding page. The change will be seen in this:

COMPARISON OF SCRIPTURE TEXTS IN THE CONSECRATION OF BISHOPS AND PRIESTS.

For the ordaining of priests (presbyters), in the Ordinal of 1549.	*For the ordaining of bishops, in the Ordinal of* 1662.
Acts xx, 17–35.	Acts xx, 17–35.
1 Tim. iii, 1–16.	1 Tim. iii, 1–16.
Matt. xxviii, 18–20.	Matt. xxviii, 18–20.
John xx, 19–23.	John xx, 19–23.
John x, 1–16.	John xx, 15–17.

From a comparison of these texts it is beyond question that a distinction of order between presbyter and bishop was not intended to be taught, but was, on the contrary, denied, by those who devised and authorized the Ordinal. From 1549 to 1662, a period of one hundred and thirteen years, the Church of England applied the same Scripture texts to the order of, and in the consecration of, a presbyter, that she did to the order of, and in the consecration of, a bishop, which custom can be accounted for in no other way than these orders were regarded by her as one and the same order.

This is not solely our individual opinion, derived

as that is from the Ordinal itself. It is the authorized and published statement of those who compiled the Ordinal, and who in that case are the best judges of what they intended should be understood as the doctrine of the Church of England. In 1536 a document, entitled "A Declaration Made of the Functions and Divine Institution of Bishops and Priests" (Burnet, Addenda to *Original Records*), was issued by authority. At the close of that declaration, after enumerating the various orders which had grown up in the Church in the course of time, the distinct affirmation is made, "The truth is that in the New Testament there is no mention made of any degrees or distinctions in orders, but only of deacons or ministers, and of priests or bishops." This document was signed by the highest representatives of the Church of England, comprising two archbishops, eleven bishops, a number of abbots and professors of sacred theology, and doctors of civil and of ecclesiastical law. But, as stated, many of those whose names are signed to this document were those, with Archbishop Cranmer at their head, who afterward framed the Ordinal, which therefore expresses the unchanged, authorized teaching of the Church of England.

There is another record of this period which furnishes further proof of the fact. The Ordinal was published in 1549. In 1540, only four years after the issue of the above declaration, Archbishop Cranmer presented certain questions to eminent authorities

in the Church, asking which were first, presbyters or bishops; whether at the beginning a presbyter made a bishop; whether a bishop hath authority to make a priest by the Scripture, or no; whether, according to the New Testament, consecration is required or only appointment be sufficient. We copy from the *Records* in Burnet, part i, book iii.

THE RESOLUTIONS OF SEVERAL BISHOPS AND DIVINES OF SOME QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE SACRAMENTS. . . . TAKEN FROM THE ORIGINALS UNDER THEIR OWN HANDS.

10. *Question.*

Whether bishops or priests were first? And if the priests were first, then the priest made the bishop.

Answer.

The bishops and priests were at one time, and were no two things, but both one office in the beginning of Christ's religion.[1]

The name of a bishop is not properly a name of order, but a name of office, signifying an overseer.[2]

Agreement.

In the tenth [as above], . . . the Bishop of St. David's, my lord elect of Westminster, Dr. Cox, Dr. Redmayn, say that "at the beginning they were all one." [Other bishops had other views, but they were opposed to Reformation.]

11. *Question.*

Whether a bishop hath authority to make a priest by the Scripture, or no? And whether any other, but only a bishop, may make a priest?

Answer.

A bishop may make a priest by the Scripture, and so may princes and governors also, and that by the authority of God committed to them.[3]

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[1] Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury.

[2] Lee, Archbishop of York.

[3] Cranmer.

Agreement.

In the eleventh: To the former part of the question the Bishop of St. David's doth answer that "bishops have no authority to make priests without they be authorized of the Christian prince." The others, all of them, do say that "they be authorized of God." . . . To the second part the answer of the Bishop of St. David's is that "laymen have other whiles made priests." . . . Drs. Tresham, Crayford, and Cox say that "laymen may make priests in time of necessity."

12. *Question.*

Whether in the New Testament be required any consecration of a bishop and priest, or only appointing to the office be sufficient?

Answer.

In the New Testament, he that is appointed to be a bishop or a priest needeth no consecration by the Scripture, for election or appointing thereto is sufficient.[1]

Agreement.

In the twelfth question, where it is asked [as above], the Bishop of St. David's saith that "only the appointing;" Dr. Cox, that "only appointing *cum manum impositione* is sufficient, without consecration."

Various opinions were given by the others, the Romanistic bishops standing by the old beliefs. Truly might we say with Stillingfleet, respecting Cranmer's views of episcopacy:

Thus we see by the testimony of him who was instrumental in our Reformation that he owned not episcopacy as a distinct order from presbytery of divine right, but only as a prudent constitution of the civil magistrate for the better governing of the Church.

Are we to imagine, then, that the Ordinal devised by him and those of like belief would reflect

[1] Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury.

doctrines directly opposite to what they did believe? The inevitable conclusion from the evidence before us is that in the opinion of the founders of the Church of England the Christian ministry did not consist of three distinct orders by divine institution; that the Ordinal of Edward VI, compiled by these founders and expressing their beliefs for a long time held, did not teach or support the theory of three such orders; and that, therefore, the doctrine of the so-called historic episcopate has no foundation in the Church of England, and is a later invention—but too late, by one hundred and thirteen years, to be of any avail—to supply the rejection of it when that Church was established by law.

From the ritual we may turn to the public formularies of faith. If the doctrine has any place in the Anglican communion we may hope to find it there.

The Forty-two Articles of 1553 were the work of Cranmer, based on some earlier Articles which he had drawn up as early as 1548.[1] Knowing Cranmer's views, it is not likely that any statement contrary to those beliefs would be found in the Articles which he composed. Further, for a true interpretation of these Articles it must be remembered that the Reformers on the Continent, both Lutherans and Calvinists, had a commanding influence with the Reformers in England. The names of Calvin, Peter

[1] Bishop Hooper, *Letters*, February 27, 1549, in *Original Letters*, p. 71; also Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, i, 766.

Martyr, Bullinger, and many divines constantly occur in the history of this period in relation to Church matters in England. Cranmer's letters to Melanchthon, Calvin, and Bullinger, in which he seeks their aid in preparing the Articles, indicate the high esteem in which these Reform leaders were held by the primate of the English Church.[1] But there is required no labored proof to show that the Reformers were opposed to the dogma of three divinely commanded orders. The Lutherans,[2] if they desired, could have received episcopal ordination from several prelates who were friends of the Reformation, such as Polentius, the Bishop of Samland; P. Speratus, of Pomerania; Matthew, the Bishop of Dantzig; Jagovius, Bishop of Brandenburg; the Archbishop of Salzburg; and Hermann, the Archbishop of Cologne, who was conspicuous for his efforts in aid of Reform. The Calvinists could have obtained orders from a papal nuncio, Vergerio, Bishop of Capo d'Istria, who entered the ranks of the Protestants, as did his brother, who was also a bishop. Then there were the Bishop of Nevers and the Bishop of Troyes, who left the Roman Church and became pastors of Reformed churches, the latter submitting to reordina-

[1] Strype, *Life of Cranmer*, pp. 407–413; Nichols, *Commentary on Book of Common Prayer*, Pref., 5; Strype, *Annals*, ii, 91; *Original Letters*.

[2] Palmer, *On the Church*, note by Whittingham, vol. i, p. 355, quoted also by Bishop Kip, *Double Witness*, etc.; but see McClintock & Strong, *in loco*.

tion. But those who understood the subject of succession and the question of orders the best seemed to have had the least anxiety about them or the validity of nonepiscopal ordination. With these Continental Reformers the English Reformers were in perfect accord.

In the Forty-two Articles of Cranmer there is not a syllable that in the light of their history can be read in favor of High Church notions. The Forty-nine Articles of 1563 were a revision of these Latin Articles of 1553. The revision was mainly the work of Archbishop Parker. Among the bishops in the Canterbury convocation which adopted these Articles, sometimes called the Elizabethan, were Horne of Winchester, William Barlow, John Scory, Richard Cox, Edwin Sandys, Jewel of Salisbury, and Parkhurst of Norwich, all of whom were champions of the Reformation and desirous of eliminating from the Church everything that savored of the old practices, even to the wearing of priestly vestments. Horne, writing to Rudolph Gaulter, July, 1565, complains that "it was enjoyned us (who had not then any authority either to make laws or repeal them) either to wear the caps and surplices or to give place to others. We complied with this injunction, lest our enemies should take possession of the places deserted by ourselves." Jewel, in his letter to Peter Martyr, gives an account of a debate to be held before the council, "wherein nine on our

side, namely, Scory, Cox, Whitehead, Sandys, Grindal, Horne, Aylmer, a Cambridge man of the name of Gheast, and myself," are to be set over against some Roman bishops. The second proposition to be argued was "that every provincial Church, even without the bidding of a General Council, has power either to establish or change or abrogate ceremonies and ecclesiastical rites, wherever it may seem to make for edification." Parkhurst says in an epistle to Henry Bullinger, May 21, 1559:

> The pope is again driven from England, to the great regret of the bishops and the whole tribe of shavelings. . . . The bishops are in future to have no palaces, estates, or country seats. The present owners are to enjoy for life those they are now in possession of. They are worthy of being suspended, not only from their office, but from a halter.

Cox to Peter Martyr writes:

> By the blessing of God all those heads of religion are restored to us which we maintained in the time of King Edward. . . . The popish priests among us are daily relinquishing their ministry, lest, as they say, they should be compelled to give their sanction to heresies.

It is not very likely that these bishops in convocation would subscribe to Articles of Religion which would stultify their consciences. It must be remembered also that during this same year 1563, in which the convocation of Canterbury met and adopted these Articles, the Council of Trent decreed, in opposition to the teachings of the Reformers everywhere, that "whosoever shall affirm that orders, or holy ordination, is not truly and properly a sacra-

ment instituted by Christ the Lord, . . . let him be anathema." It also decreed that "whosoever shall affirm that the Holy Spirit is not given by ordination, and therefore that bishops say in vain, 'Receive the Holy Ghost,' or that thereby a character is not impressed, or that he who was once a priest may become a layman again, let him be anathema."

Is it probable that the Reformed bishops at Canterbury would adopt any article in their Confession of Faith that would be in harmony with the Romanist view of the Christian ministry as here given, and which view is now stoutly maintained by High Churchmen? On the contrary, the twenty-fifth article adopted by them, and which settles the whole question, expressly declares that orders is not to be counted a sacrament of the Gospel, it having "no visible sign or ceremony ordained of God." The twenty-third article simply affirms that it is not lawful for one to exercise the office of the ministry unless he is lawfully called to the same; that is, no one should obtrude himself without the voice of the Church into the ministry of that Church. Bishop Burnet, in his comment on this article, says:

> It leaves the matter open and at large for such accidents as had happened,[1] and such as might still happen. They who drew it had the state of the several Churches before their eyes that had been differently reformed; and although their own had

[1] What becomes of uninterrupted succession when "accidents" do happen?

been less forced to go out of the beaten path than any other, yet they knew that all things among themselves had not gone according to those rules that ought to be sacred in regular times; necessity has no law, and is a law to itself.

This comment of Burnet is both a confession and a defense. It shows that in the deliberate judgment of him who wrote a history of the Reformation in England, and who had access to the records of that period, the founders of the Church of England did not intend by anything in their formularies of faith to teach apostolical succession, but that, on the contrary, they placed the authority to preach and minister in God's house, not in the hands of bishops claiming succession as the warrant for their act, but in the hands of those having public authority in the Church; for they knew that accidents had happened to the succession, and that the necessity of Christ's Church, rather than a humanly devised historic episcopate originating in canonical rules, must in the nature of things be the fundamental law.

CHAPTER V.

Teachings of the Reformers.

ANGLICAN writers endeavor to create the impression that the doctrine of the historic episcopate now held by the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church was also held by the English Church from its beginning at the Reformation. They also attempt to make it appear that the Anglican ministry was established on that doctrine. A greater perversion of history it would be difficult to find. As well might Roman Catholic writers affirm the Roman Church of the present, with its gorgeous ritual, intricate ceremonies, doctrines of masses and indulgences, its infallibility, mariolatry, and hunger for imperialism, to be the same Church, in doctrine, worship, and ceremony, with that company of believers which gathered in the tenement houses on the banks of the Tiber to hear the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. The Roman Catholic doctrine of orders adopted by High Churchmen was utterly discarded by the founders of the English Church, and to emphasize their dissent they both maintained fraternal relations with, and sought assistance from, the Protestant, episcopacy-rejecting Churches of Germany, France, and Holland. Bishop

Jewel, under date of January 8, 1566, writes to Bullinger and Lavater:

The contest respecting the linen surplice, about which I doubt not you have heard, either from our friend Abel or Parkhurst, is not yet at rest. That matter still somewhat disturbs weak minds. And I wish that all, even the slightest, vestiges of popery might be removed from our Churches and, above all, from our minds. But the queen at this time is unable to endure the least alteration in matters of religion.

Bishop Grindal, under date of August 27, 1566, in a letter to the same Henry Bullinger, forever silences the claims of those who insist on the episcopate as a doctrine of the English Church, if they would have any regard for historical facts. He writes:

We who are now bishops,[1] on our first return, and before we entered on our ministry, contended long and earnestly for the removal of those things that have occasioned the present dispute; but as we were unable to prevail either with the queen or the Parliament we judged it best, after a consultation on the subject, not to desert our Churches for the sake of a few ceremonies, and those not unlawful in themselves, especially since the pure doctrine of the Gospel remained in all its integrity and freedom; in which, even to this day [notwithstanding the attempts of many to the contrary], we most fully agree with your Churches and with the Confession[2] you have lately set forth.

We have seen that the Church of England, neither in her Articles of Religion nor in the Ordinal used by her authority and that of the crown, made any claim to the historic episcopate in the modern sense, or considered her bishops to be a distinct order

[1] They were Cox, Horne, Parkhurst, Grindal, Sandys, Jewel, and Bentham.

[2] The Helvetic Confession.

from presbyters. It has also been seen that Archbishop Cranmer, the ruling genius in the work of Reform under Edward VI, expressly repudiated, with the most eminent bishops and divines of that formative period, the dogma of three divinely constituted orders. Nor were these leaders alone in their belief. They had scriptural and historical grounds for their faith. In the Middle Ages bishops and canonists and even a pope, Urban II, had declared that a bishop was not superior to a presbyter in the power of order. Gieseler, referring to the well-known passage in Jerome, says, "It is remarkable how long afterward persons maintained this view of the original identity of bishops and presbyters," and cites as orthodox authorities Bernoldus (1088), the defender of Gregory VII, Pope Urban II, Peter Lombard, the Glosses in the Gratian Decretals, Archbishop Tudeschus (1428), and the papal canonist, John Paul Lancellotus (1563). Not till the Council of Trent had decreed in its twenty-third session (July, 1563) that bishops were in the place of the apostles—*in apostolorum locum*—and were superior to presbyters, was this ancient belief regarded as heretical.

Therefore, since Anglo-Catholic writers endeavor to pervert or to pass lightly over the historic truth in their zeal to propagate their doctrine of the historic episcopate, we shall now set forth in brief the teachings of the Reformers, first bishops, and defenders of the Church of England.

Tyndale, translator of the English Bible and martyr (1536), opposes the use of the word "priest" as having no place in the Gospel. He teaches that consecration is not necessary, that the laying on of hands by the apostles was not after the manner of the dumb blessing of Roman bishops; they simply told the appointed ministers their duty and gave them a charge and warned them to be faithful in the Lord's business, just as temporal officers are chosen and their duty read to them and they admitted to their office on their promise to faithfully discharge their duties.[1]

Lambert (1538), in his trial before Henry VIII, in answer to the question, "Dost thou believe orders to be a sacrament of the Church?" replied that in the primitive times there were only two offices in the Church of God, bishops and deacons, as the Scriptures testify, and as was manifested by Jerome in his Commentary when he says that bishops and priests were all one.[2]

Bradford, the martyr (1555), in giving an account of an interview he had while in prison with an archdeacon who came to examine him, notes his replies to certain questions relating to bishops and the succession:

To this I answered that the ministry of God's word and ministers is an essential point; but to translate this to bishops and

[1] *Obedience of a Christian Man.*

[2] *Acts and Monuments*, Fox, vol. v, p. 182.

their succession, quoth I, is a plain subtlety; and therefore, quoth I, that it may be plain, I will ask you a question. Tell me whether the Scripture know any difference between bishops and ministers, which you call priests? "No," saith he.[1]

In the sixth part of the Catechism by Thomas Becon, chaplain to Archbishop Cranmer, is this dialogue:

Father.—What difference is there between a bishop and a spiritual minister?

Son.—None at all; their office is one, their authority and power are one. And therefore St. Paul calleth the spiritual ministers sometimes bishops, sometimes elders, sometimes pastors, sometimes teachers, etc.

Father.—What is "bishop" in English?

Son.—An overseer or superintendent, as St. Paul said to the elders or bishops of Ephesus: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to the flock over whom the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, overseers, superintendents, to rule or feed the congregation of God which he hath purchased with his blood."

This same doctrine is taught in the *Institutions of a Christian Man*, published by authority in 1537.

Hooper, bishop and martyr (1555), in his *Godly Confession and Protestation of the Christian Faith*, writes:

As concerning the ministers of the Church, I believe that the Church is bound to no sort of people or any ordinary succession of bishops, cardinals, or such like, but unto the word of God only. . . . And because the Holy Ghost was in St. Peter at Rome, and in many other godly men that have occupied bishoprics and dioceses, therefore the same gifts, they say, must needs follow in their successors, although, indeed, they are no more like in zeal or diligence than Peter to Judas, Balaam to Jeremiah, Annas and Caiaphas to John and James.

[1] *Life of John Bradford*, London, 1855, p. 192.

In 1563 Pilkington, the first Protestant Bishop of Durham, maintained in his *Confutation* that the privileges and superiorities which bishops have above other ministers are rather granted for maintaining of better order and quietness in commonwealths than commanded by God in his word.[1]

In the year 1562 Bishop Jewel, one of the brightest ornaments of the Church of England, issued his famous *Apology of the Church of England*, which occasioned great controversy with the Romanists, and was soon followed by the no less valuable *Defense of the Apology*. So much might be quoted from this celebrated bishop, whose work was ordered to be chained in the cathedrals where all might read it, that it is difficult to know where to begin or where to leave off. In his reply to Harding, his Roman opponent, he grants superiority of primates over other bishops, but affirms that it was by custom rather than by Scripture, and quotes Jerome, as do all the Reformers when writing on the constitution of the Christian ministry:

> Let bishops understand that they are above priests rather of custom than of any truth or right of Christ's institutions, and that they ought to rule the Church altogether. . . . St. Augustine saith, "The office of a bishop is above the office of a priest [not by the authority of the Scriptures, but] after the manner of honor, which the custom of the Church hath now obtained."

[1] *Works*, Parker Soc. ed.

Such, then, was also the opinion of Jewel. Uninterrupted succession as a necessary element of a true ministry received from him as little countenance. He attacks the claim of the Roman Church to succession, and, what should be carefully noted as of the utmost significance, affirms that the Church of England does not depend on the validity of the orders of those who, having been ordained in the Roman Church, became the founders of the Church of England. If none of those ministers, says he, "nor of us," were left alive, yet the Church of England would not flee to Louvain for Roman orders, for the Church would have power to institute its own orders, as "Tertullian saith, 'And we, being laymen, are we not priests?'" In chapter xi he says:

> But what meant M. Harding to come in here with the difference between priests and bishops? Thinketh he that priests and bishops hold only by tradition? Or is it so horrible a blasphemy as he maketh it to say that by the Scriptures of God a bishop and a priest are all one?

He then cites the testimony of Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Ambrose, and of the Apostle Paul in proof of the correctness of his position.

Nowell's *Catechism* appeared in 1570, and was subscribed by all the bishops in the lower convocation. That work taught the doctrine of the Reformers.

We are now arrived upon a new epoch. In 1572 arose the controversy over Church polity between

the Puritans and the Churchmen which has continued to this day. The Puritans, under the inspiration of their leaders, who had been refugees among the Reformed Churches of Geneva, Zurich, and Strasburg, were impatient to model the Church of England in accordance with the severe simplicity of those foreign Churches. For stately ceremony, adding dignity and grace to the services of the sanctuary, they had as little taste as they had appreciation for the glories of Christian art, whether seen in the majesty of Gothic shrine, in the beauties of cathedral window, or in some sweet dream of genius on canvas or in stone. To the Puritan of that day, fresh from the bare walls of Zurich, the carvings of York Minster or the vaulted ceilings of Westminster Abbey were but reminders of the heathenish pomp and splendor of the scarlet woman that sat on the seven hills. But the Church of England was entering the dawn of another day. Those who succeeded the first bishops and leaders of Reform endeavored to maintain a position midway between the excesses of Rome on the one hand and the severe plainness of frigid Puritanism on the other. The service of the mass they discarded as a corruption of the truth; but the noble liturgy, elevating in thought, beautiful in expression, and sacred by the memories of a thousand years, they retained with intelligent devotion. Episcopacy, as a divinely constituted institution superior to presbytery, they rejected as un-

scriptural; but with balanced judgment they held and reverenced the office which was the symbol of unity, the seat of danger and of service, as well as the throne of honor in the Christian Church when the Pantheon was yet filled with the gods of the empire, and the followers of Christ, under Roman law, plucked the purple flower of martyrdom.

The occasion of the controversy was the publication of a Puritan work, *Admonition to Parliament*, which was followed the same year by *A Second Admonition*. To this Archbishop Whitgift, "a sage and prudent man," says Stillingfleet, "whom we cannot suppose either ignorant of the sense of the Church of England or afraid or unwilling to defend it," made reply. Like other great teachers of the Church, he defends episcopacy, not on the ground of divine right, but solely on the plea of expediency. His answer, which was approved by Archbishop Parker, Bishop Cox, and others, was considered, says Strype, one of the public books of the Church of England, and was held in as high esteem as Jewel's *Apology* and *Defense*. Bishop Whitgift denies the conferring of the Holy Ghost in ordination by imposition of hands; agrees with Calvin in his exposition of 1 Tim. iii and 2 Tim. i; approves of episcopacy for England, but does not condemn other Churches for the lack of it.[1]

[1] *Answer to the Admonition*, Tract iii, chap. iv.

Fulke, master of Pembroke College, in his spirited reply to Stapleton, the Romanist, said:

The third demand is that we must show a succession from the apostles, as the Scripture witnesseth the Church to have and the ancient fathers exacted of the heretics. The Scripture requireth no succession of names, persons, or places, but of faith and doctrine; and that we prove when we approve our faith and doctrine by the doctrine of the apostles.

Bancroft's sermon at St. Paul's Cross (1588) brought out a reply from Dr. Rainoldes of Oxford, who was regarded as the most learned man of his time. Bancroft had asserted that "the superiority of bishops over the clergy is God's ordinance." Rainoldes denies the truthfulness of the statement on the authority of Holy Scripture, and quotes an imposing array of eminent writers of antiquity, and in addition, which establishes the position taken at the beginning of this chapter, cites, as in harmony with the opinion of Jerome and the authorities referred to by Jewel, the founders, bishops, and doctors of divinity of the Church of England. His comprehensive summary is conclusive:

Besides, all that have labored in reforming the Church for five hundred years have taught that all pastors, be they entitled bishops or priests, have equal authority and power by God's word; as, first, the Waldensians; next, Marsilius Patavinus; then Wyclif and his scholars; afterward, Huss and the Hussites; and, last of all, Luther, Calvin, Brentius, Bullinger, and Musculus. Among ourselves we have bishops, the queen's professors of divinity in our universities (Drs. Humphrey and White), and other learned men consenting herein, as Bradford, Lambert, Jewel, Pilkington, Humphrey, Fulke, etc. But what

do I speak of particular persons? It is the common judgment of the Reformed Churches of Helvetia, Savoy, France, Scotland, Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Low Countries, and our own. I hope Dr. Bancroft will not say that all these have approved that for sound doctrine which was condemned by the general consent of the whole Church for heresy in a most flourishing time. I hope he will acknowledge that he was overseen when he avouched the superiority which bishops have among us over the clergy to be by God's ordinance.

Saravia, the learned friend of Hooker, is held by Anglican writers to have asserted the divine right of bishops. But he also maintained that presbyters could ordain bishops, for the reason that in the lowest grade, if bishops are taken away, the whole power of the keys resides; and that of the ministers who gathered at Poissy some were ordained by bishops of the Roman Church, others by the Reformed Church, "yet none of them ought to have been ashamed of his ordination."

In 1593 Hooker's monumental work, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, appeared. It is unsatisfactory to those whose cause it was intended to support, for, although Hooker defends episcopacy as a divine institution, which may be admitted in a very modified sense, he nevertheless concedes that episcopal ordination is not at all times necessary. Thus he writes:

Now, whereas hereupon some do infer that no ordination can stand, but only such as is made by bishops which have their ordination likewise by other bishops before them, till we come to the very apostles of Christ themselves, . . . to this we

answer that there may be sometimes very just and sufficient reason to allow ordination made without a bishop.

Field's treatise *Of the Church* (1606), a work highly esteemed by divines of the English Church, appeared in the Roman controversy. On the vital question of the power of order he agrees with Hooker. To the question, whether the power of order be so essentially annexed to the order of bishops that none but bishops may in any case ordain, he replies:

> The power of ecclesiastical or sacred order, that is, the power and authority to intermeddle with things pertaining to the service of God, . . . is equal and the same in all those whom we call presbyters. . . . Only for order sake and the preservation of peace there is a limitation of the use and the exercise of the same; . . . whereby it is most evident that that wherein a bishop excelleth a presbyter is not a distinct power of order, but an eminence and dignity only, specially yielded to one above all the rest of the same rank for order sake and to preserve the unity and peace of the Church.[1]

Mason, whose *Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ* (1613) serves as the armory whence the advocates of the historic episcopate draw their weapons, was a stout defender of the legitimacy of English episcopacy, but he was too well versed in the doctrines of the reformers, founders, and bishops of his Church, and in the opinions of the learned men of his time, to defend a doctrine at variance with Scripture, history, and the consensus of the Protestant world. He admits that the line of succession was inter-

[1] Book iii, chap. xxxix, "Of Succession," etc.

rupted in the Churches of Constantinople and of Alexandria, and also in the Church of Rome; that succession without true doctrine is no true succession; that no form of government by God's commandment is binding universally, perpetually, unchangeably, on all Churches; and that, "seeing a presbyter is equal to a bishop in the power of order, he hath equally intrinsical power to give orders."

Dr. Whitaker, who, like Whitgift, certainly knew the sense of the Church of England, says:

> I confess that there was originally no difference between a bishop and a presbyter. Luther and the other heroes of the Reformation were presbyters, even according to the ordination of the Romish Church, and therefore they were *jure divino* bishops. Consequently whatever belongs to bishops belongs, *jure divino*, to themselves. As for bishops being afterward placed over presbyters, that was a human arrangement for the removal of schisms, as the historians of the times testify.[1]

To these illustrious names the historian of English episcopacy might add, almost without leaving the sixteenth century, such authorities as Sutcliffe, Parker, Crakanthrop, Rogers, Willet, Bishops Bridges, Downham, Morton, Andrewes, Hall, Davenant, Stillingfleet, Archbishop Ussher, and many others, who all agree that the historic episcopate now advocated with such zeal was not at any time up to the year 1662 a doctrine of the Church of England. Whether the teachings and practice of

[1] *Works*, vol. i, p. 509, fol., Geneva, 1610.

those who founded that Church and died for it, and the opinions of those who governed it and defended it against Romanism and Puritanism for one hundred and thirteen years—during which period there was no voice raised among them questioning those teachings—whether the authoritative declarations of these bishops and doctors are to be accepted as expressing the sense of the Church of England, rather than the borrowed opinions of a new school of divines who teach the opposite of these Reformers, we may confidently leave to the unbiased judgment of common sense.

But not only did the Reformers of the Anglican Church defend the doctrine of orders as above given —the Church practiced their principles. The Church of England was in fellowship and agreement in doctrine with the Reformed Churches on the Continent, and recognized the nonepiscopal orders of those Churches as valid.

In 1873, during a meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York, the Dean of Canterbury (Dr. R. Payne Smith) and Dr. Cummins, assistant bishop of the Protestant Episcopal diocese of Kentucky, partook of the Lord's Supper in a Presbyterian church. This fraternal act gave such offense to High Churchmen that Bishop Cummins was forced to resign his office. The organization of a new denomination, the Reformed Episcopal Church, was the result. But in 1618, at the Synod of Dort, Bishop

Carleton, Drs. Davenant, Ward, and Hall, all eminent men, with other deputies of the Church of England, received the holy communion from the hands of Dr. Bogermann, the Presbyterian moderator of the assembly; and Dr. Hall, afterward the Bishop of Norwich, wrote, "There is no place on earth like the Synod of Dort, no place where I should like so much to dwell." The difference between these two events of 1618 and 1873 marks the difference between the teachings and practice of the Church of England in her purest days and the Church of England as she now is, under the influence of the school of Laud.

Cranmer invited the Reformers Martin Bucer, Peter Martyr, Tremellius, Fagius, Melanchthon, and others to teach at Oxford and Cambridge.[1] The Articles of Religion which were put forth from time to time were based for the most part on the Confessions of the Reformed Churches.[2] King Edward VI in 1550 granted a charter to German refugees in London under John à Lasco allowing them full privileges, not on the principle of toleration, but in order that, as the record reads, "a Church instructed in truly Christian and apostolical opinions and rites, and grown up under holy ministers, might be preserved."[3] Queen Elizabeth sent a representative to

[1] Arch. Parker, *Antiq. Britan.*, p. 580.

[2] Hardwick, *History of the Thirty-nine Articles;* Burnet, *Thirty-nine Articles.* [3] Burnet, *Records*, No. 51, part ii, book i.

a meeting of the Reformed Churches at Frankfort.[1] In 1580, by order of Elizabeth, public prayers were offered for these Churches: "And herein, good Lord, by special name we beseech thee for the Churches of France, Flanders, and for such other places," etc. In the "Injunctions Given by the Queen's Majesty as well to the Clergy as to the Laity of this Realm" (1559) prayer was enjoined "for Christ's holy Catholic Church, that is, for the whole congregation of Christian people" dispersed throughout the world. The thirty-ninth canon of the Church of England (A. D. 1603) declares:

> So far was it from the purpose of the Church of England to forsake and reject the Churches of Italy, France, Spain, Germany, or any such like Churches, in all things which they held and practiced that (as the apology of the Church of England confesses) it doth with reverence retain those ceremonies which do neither endanger the Church of God nor offend the minds of men.

Passing from these public acts to the averments of ecclesiastical authorities, we find Archbishop Parker approving the Helvetic Confession, and Rogers, chaplain to Archbishop Bancroft, citing the confessions of the continental Churches in proof of the theological soundness of the English articles. The *Zurich Letters* on every page bear witness to the close relation that existed between the Church of England and the nonepiscopal communions beyond the sea. "We have exhibited to the queen," writes

[1] See Blondel, *Actes Authentiques*, ed. 1605, p. 61.

Jewel to Peter Martyr, April 28, 1559, "all our articles of religion and doctrine, and have not departed in the slightest degree from the Confession of Zurich." Again, on February 7, 1562, he writes:

But, now that the full light of the Gospel has shone forth, the very vestiges of error must as far as possible be removed, together with the rubbish, and, as the saying is, with the very dust. And I wish we could effect this in respect to that linen surplice; for, as to matters of doctrine, we have pared everything away to the very quick, and do not differ from your doctrine by a nail's breadth.

Bishop Horne writes to Henry Bullinger, December 13, 1563:

We have throughout England the same ecclesiastical doctrine as yourselves; as to rites and ceremonies [the original manuscript is here illegible], nor, as the people are led to believe, do we at all differ in our estimation of them.

Richard Cox to W. Weidner, May 20, 1559:

Meanwhile we, the little flock who for these last five years, by the blessing of God, have been hidden among you in Germany, are thundering forth in our pulpits, and especially before our Queen Elizabeth, that the Roman pontiff is truly Antichrist, and that traditions are for the most part mere blasphemies.

Bishop Grindal, writing to Bullinger, August 27, 1566, says:

We must fully agree with your Churches and with the confession you have lately set forth.

Bishop Hall, in his *Peacemaker*, exclaims:

Blessed be God, there is no difference in any essential matter between the Church of England and her sisters of the Reformation.[1]

[1] *Works*, vol. iii, p. 560.

To this testimony, adduced from the writings of those who were building the Anglican structure, may be added that of Bancroft, Saravia, Hooker, Field, Andrewes, Ussher, indeed, of all the leading divines and prelates of that Church, up to the degenerate period of the Restoration.

Finally, the founders of the English Church not only rejected the doctrine of three divinely instituted orders, and recognized all other Churches of the Reformation as true Churches of Christ, but, as is involved in that fellowship, they and the Church of England by law admitted the validity of the ministerial orders in those Churches. This is conceded by candid writers of the High Church party, as, for example, Keble, in his Preface to Hooker's works. By the act 13 Elizabeth, says Strype, "the ordinations of the foreign Reformed Churches were made valid, and those that had no other orders were made of the same capacity with others to enjoy any place within England, merely on their subscribing the articles." Burnet tells us that up to the year 1662 those who entered the Church of England from the foreign Churches were not required to be reordained. Bishop Fleetwood corroborates the same by saying that many ministers came from the Churches of Scotland, France, and the Netherlands who were ordained by presbyters only, and not bishops, and were placed in charge of churches without reordination, they simply subscribing to the Articles. Hal-

lam, in his *Constitutional History of England*, is also in evidence:

> It had not been unusual from the beginning of the Reformation to admit ministers ordained in foreign Churches to benefices in England; no reordination had ever been practiced with respect to those who had received the imposition of hands in a regular Church; and hence it appears that the Church of England, whatever tenet might latterly have been broached in controversy, did not consider the ordinations of presbyters invalid.

See also Lathbury, *History of the English Episcopacy*, pp. 19, 63, 170; Principal Tulloch, in *Contemporary Review*, December, 1874; Grub, *Ecclesiastical History of Scotland;* Strype, *Annals of the Reformation*, ii, 522, and *Life of Grindal*, 271; Collier, *Ecclesiastical History*, ii, 594; Neal, *History of the Puritans*, i, 258; Cosin, *Letter to M. Cordel; Judgment of the Archbishop of Armagh on Certain Points*, 113; Brandt, *History of the Reformation*, iii, 4–6; Crakanthorp, *Defensio Ecclesiæ Ang.*, 254.

CHAPTER VI.

Historic Episcopate in the Church of England a Nullity.

IT is evident from a study of the preceding chapters that the possession of the historic episcopate by the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church is, on any rational principle, utterly improbable, if not impossible. No one of all the learned bishops and divines of that Church during the long period of one hundred and thirteen years through which we have gone seems to have been aware of its existence in that Church, or to have felt the need of it, or to have considered it as of any special value in any Church that possessed it or desired it. But, on the contrary, the sturdiest pillars of the Anglican Church both challenged the reality of the fact and rejected its principles. This, we think, has been sufficiently proved. It is our purpose now to go farther, and to demonstrate that the doctrine of the historic episcopate, or apostolical succession, could not by any possibility be held by any Church adopting the doctrines of the Reformation, and that, therefore, the historic episcopate is not now, and never was, in the possession of the Protestant Church of England.

Now, it is conceded by Anglicans that the Roman Church possesses the succession, or historic episcopate. The evangelical Churches of Christendom make no such admission, for the fact has never yet been proved; but High Church advocates are compelled to admit it by the nature of their position, since from Roman sources Anglican orders were originally derived. To deny succession, then, to the Church of Rome would be to deny it to the Church of England. Without agreeing to this concession of Anglicans, but assuming that such is the historical fact, we inquire, What is this historic episcopate, or apostolical succession, held by the Roman communion and which Anglicans claim was transmitted to the Church of England?

It is to be presumed that the Roman Church knows its own doctrine; this doctrine, then, as maintained by that Church is as follows: No one can lawfully assume the office of an ambassador unless he is commissioned by lawful authority. As in the old dispensation, so in the new, no man taketh to himself the office of a minister of God unless he be called as was Aaron. The high priest of our profession, Jesus Christ, did not enter upon his ministry until he was commissioned by the Voice from heaven and received the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Likewise, when he appointed his apostles to be ministers of grace he gave them formal authority to act in his name. "As my Father hath

sent me, even so send I you."[1] Clothed with this authority from Christ himself which they alone possessed, the apostles went forth into the world proclaiming the Gospel and organizing churches or Christian societies. When in the run of time the number of churches multiplied and personal supervision by the apostles was impossible, they appointed pastors over these churches, endowing them with authority and power to exercise the office of the ministry of reconciliation in the Church of God. These pastors, thus commissioned and endowed, transmitted to their successors in office the grace and authority they had received from the apostles; and these in turn transmitted the same sacerdotal gifts to their successors, and so on, in uninterrupted succession to the present, each in the series receiving in full the power of order transmitted from the apostles and originally given by Christ himself.

This power of order consists of order and jurisdiction. By order is signified the power to offer sacrifice; by jurisdiction, the authority to govern. The Roman Church teaches that this priesthood was instituted by the Lord our Saviour, and that to his apostles and their successors this power was given to consecrate, offer, and minister his body and blood and to remit and retain sins.[2] This priesthood was established at the Last Supper,[3] and the power of

[1] John xx, 21. [2] *Concil. Trid.*, sess. xxxi, c. i.
[3] *Concil. Trid.*, sess. xxii, c. i.

jurisdiction was given when Jesus breathed on his disciples, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosesoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whosesoever sins ye retain, they are retained."[1] The means by which this power is transmitted is the sacrament of holy orders administered by a bishop. In this sacrament the Holy Ghost is received, and an indelible character is thereby impressed on the soul of the ordained. "Whosoever shall affirm that the Holy Spirit is not given in ordination, and that, therefore, bishops say in vain, 'Receive the Holy Ghost,' or that thereby a character is not impressed, . . . let him be anathema."[2]

Such is the doctrine of apostolic succession held by the Church of Rome. The pith of it is the transmission of sacerdotal powers, the power to offer the eucharist and to forgive sins. This is the mystical grace resulting from the gift of the Holy Ghost in the imposition of hands by a bishop—the power to change bread and wine into the real body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. This essential element of the doctrine of apostolical succession is conveniently passed over by those who, desirous of succession, but wishing to avoid the logical consequences involved, substitute chronology for theology. The material, mechanical, tactual succession of persons in unbroken series, upon which so many writers

[1] *Concil. Trid.*, sess. xiv, c. i.
[2] *Concil. Trid.*, sess. xxxii, c. iv.

place emphasis, and as many more labor unnecessarily to disprove, is nothing more than the mere outward covering, the shell, so to speak; the real thing itself being the mystical grace of priesthood, without which tactual succession is an empty and insignificant trifle, and can be of important interest only to those who endeavor to substitute another and different kind of succession from that which is considered as the only real succession by that Church which Anglicans affirm always has been, and is now, in possession of the succession derived from the apostles, but which succession, according to Cardinal Newman, depends on the "immediate, present, living authority" of that Church, and "not on any historical antiquarian research or genealogical table."[1]

Let it be granted, then, that the founders of the English Episcopal Church—Cranmer, Ridley, Barlow, Parker, Hodgkins—received this ordination and this succession when they were ordained priests in the Church of Rome. But did they transmit this ordination, or any element of this succession, to those whom they ordained when founding the Church of England? Did they intend to do so? Did they have authority to do so? Did they have power in themselves to do so? Herein lies the heart of the whole question, and it cannot be passed over; for nothing can be plainer than the clear fact that, if

[1] *Essays*, vol. ii, p. 87.

these questions cannot be answered in the affirmative, then apostolical succession never did belong to the Church of England, and certainly is not to be found there now.

Now, it is a fundamental and universally admitted principle that no one who withdraws from, or is excommunicated by, a Church can exercise in the name, or by the authority, of that Church any right, power, privilege, or authority conferred upon him while he was in that Church. Under such circumstances he is to that Church as if he had never existed. He is deprived of all relation and the use of every ecclesiastical power, for that which has the power to give has the power to take away. Illustrations of this principle may be found in every age of the Church. The Arian, Eutychian, and Donatist bishops were all validly consecrated; but when they rebelled against the authority which commissioned them and gave them jurisdiction all their acts were declared null and void. They were no longer in the line of succession and could not transmit what they did not possess. Cyprian, whose Church system is so much eulogized by Anglican and Romanist, in an epistle to Stephen, Bishop of Rome, in which he and other North African bishops express their disciplinary views concerning certain presbyters who had returned from error to the bosom of the Church, writes:

We tell you farther, dear brother, by common consent and authority, that if any presbyters or deacons, who have either been ordained before in the Catholic Church and afterward turned traitors and rebels against the Church, or have been promoted by a profane ordination, in a state of heresy, by false bishops and antichrists, contrary to our Lord's institution—that such, if they return to the Church, shall only be admitted to lay communion.

But we need not refer to ancient history for examples. This principle is recognized and acted upon by the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church. In 1873, as we have seen, Bishop Cummins withdrew from the Protestant Episcopal Church, giving as his reason the progress of ritualism in that denomination. With others of like belief he organized the Reformed Episcopal Church. The bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church met and formally deposed him from his office. But the Reformed Church prospered. Bishops were ordained for England, and houses of worship were opened there. The Anglican bishops of Chichester and of St. Albans warned their flocks with true apostolic zeal against these new bishops, as intruders in the guise of real bishops, and denied that they had any jurisdiction. The Bishop of St. Albans in a charge delivered to his clergy declared the orders of Dr. Gregg, a bishop of the new Church, to be also invalid. The correspondence resulting is important in many ways.[1]

[1] See *Methodist Quarterly Review*, October, 1870, p. 735.

To the charge of the Anglican prelate Dr. Gregg replied:

MY LORD: In your charge delivered on Tuesday you not only questioned the validity of my consecration as derived from a deposed bishop of the American Episcopal Church, but you failed to state the real reason for the formation of the Reformed Episcopal Church in this country, namely, the extreme sacerdotalism which almost everywhere prevails and will ruin the Church of England. The bishop through whom the historical succession reached me had his consecration directly through the Anglican communion, and had not been deposed when the succession was transmitted through him to the three bishops by whom I was validly and canonically consecrated. . . . I am, etc.

To this the Bishop of St. Albans replied:

REVEREND SIR: You assert that the bishop through whom the historical succession reached you had his consecration directly through the Anglican communion, and had not been deposed when the succession was transmitted. I presume that the bishop to whom you refer was Dr. Cummins. My statement was that this bishop, though not yet formally deposed, lay under prohibition from performing any episcopal act, which prohibition was publically notified December 1, 1873, just a fortnight before he proceeded to consecrate that bishop through whom, as you say, you received the historical succession. I have authority to state that none of the American bishops have ever recognized the act of pretended consecration performed by Dr. Cummins or any act growing out of it. I am, etc.

Here we see the application of the law. Although Bishop Cummins was himself validly and canonically ordained, and did receive, we will assume, what was called the succession, nevertheless, when he seceded from his Church he was immediately and *de facto* prohibited from the exercise of episcopal function; the

succession was withdrawn by the authority that gave it; his consecrations were "pretended" consecrations; he was without mission or jurisdiction; and all his acts were null and void.

But if the Protestant Episcopal Church could thus annihilate in the Rev. Dr. Cummins all authority and power formerly belonging to him as bishop in that Church, and if as a result all consecrations by him were pretended consecrations, conveying no power or grace whatever, and all possibility of transmitting the historic episcopate ceased in him, how was it possible for the succession ever to have come to the Protestant Episcopal Church itself? By what method of logic, by what course of reasoning, can a reflecting mind make it appear that this succession or episcopate ever reached the Church of England? By whom was it transmitted, and by whose authority? The founders of the English Church who gave the first ministry to that Church were deposed and excommunicated by the Church of Rome, of which they were originally ministers. All sacerdotal power and ecclesiastical authority of every character was withdrawn from them by the same power that first conferred it, and therefore, as a necessary consequence, the transmission of that power or authority and the continuity of the succession were *de facto* impossible. Neither Cranmer, nor Ridley, nor Barlow, nor any of the Reformers could transmit or give to others what he himself did not have. What value,

then, on Anglican principles of succession, had the acts of the founders of the Anglican Church, and what other than a "pretended" consecration was the consecration of Matthew Parker, the corner stone of the Anglican hierarchy? These Reformers could claim no authority from the Church they had denounced, from which they had withdrawn, and which had excommunicated them. From God directly they might indeed claim authority, as did the apostle Paul, and from God they should show their credentials, as we believe they did; or they might claim it from the Church which they had newly organized, though as a matter of fact the Church was not consulted. But from the Church in which they were ordained and from which they had separated they could claim no authority, nor did they possess any authority or power, any more than Dr. Cummins did when deposed by the Protestant Episcopal Church; for the power that gave had the power to take away.

Again, not only did that Church which Anglicans concede to be in possession of the succession most solemnly, and with all the spiritual terrors then invoked by the mighty curse of Rome, stop the flow of mystic grace constituting the essence of succession, but these Reformers, the founders of the Anglican Church, never claimed succession, or that they had transmitted or could transmit it to others whom they ordained. It is impossible to think of these

preachers of a pure Gospel transmitting Roman succession. The indelible character, *character indelebilis*, which Rome taught was involved in the very nature of ordination, was spoken of with unmeasured contempt. Calvin, whose influence on English thought was most powerful, wrote of it as a fable invented in the schools of ignorant monks. Dr. Fulke, the master of Pembroke College, in his controversy with a Romanist affirmed:

> There is no evidence at all that the order of priesthood is a sacrament or giveth grace.

In another work he says:

> You are most deceived if you [the Catholics] think we esteem your offices of bishops, priests, deacons, any better than laymen. Again, with all our hearts we defy, abhor, detest, and spit at your stinking, greasy, antichristian orders.[1]

Bishop Jewel, writing to Simler, November, 1559, says:

> As to your expressing your hopes that our bishops will be inaugurated [2] without any superstitious and offensive ceremonies, you mean, I suppose, without oil, without the chrism, without the tonsure. And you are not mistaken; for the sink would indeed have been emptied to no purpose if we had suffered those dregs to settle at the bottom. These oily, shaven, portly hypocrites we have sent back to Rome, from whence we first imported them; for we require our bishops to be pastors, laborers, and watchmen.

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[1] *The Retention.*

[2] The translator of the *Zurich Letters* has rendered Jewel's word *inaugurari* by "consecrated," which is scarcely defensible. Jewel's term throws a flood of light on Parker's consecration. Consecration is not inauguration in ecclesiastical terminology.

"I would not have you think," wrote Bishop Whitaker, who knew the sense of the Reformers, "that we make such reckoning of your orders as to hold our own vocation unlawful without them. And therefore keep your orders to yourselves."

Calfhill, Bishop-elect of Worcester, in his *Answer to the Treatise of the Cross*, says:

> For the *character indelebilis*," the mark unmovable," is thereby given. Yet there is a way to have it out well enough—to rub them well favorably with salt and ashes, or, if that will not serve, with a little soap.

Can High Church writers hope to make intelligent readers believe that these men had any such reverence for, or idea of, apostolical succession in the Roman Church as they themselves assiduously cultivate? Is it possible to believe that these men when laying the foundations of the English Church had the remotest thought, the dimmest conception, that they were dependent on the Roman Church for their episcopal orders, and that they were transmitting the same succession which they had by virtue of their orders received from that Church?

If anything is certain in English history it is that the Reformers broke with Rome. They rejected all the doctrinal accretions of the centuries and went back by divine right to the pure word of God; they rejected the mass, the priesthood which rested on the mass, and therefore rejected all idea of the reality of that imaginary, mystical power conferred in

ordination and without which, according to Roman teaching, there is no real ordination. The rejection of the mass and of all the teachings connected with it carried with it the rejection of the whole doctrine of apostolical succession; for it was that kind of succession, the essence of which is the mystic grace of priesthood, and not any other kind, which they received, if they obtained any, from that Church. It was that kind only which she had taught, that kind only which she possessed or of which she had any knowledge, and that kind only which she had to give. The apostolic Church or the Church of the Nicene period might have had different views of the succession and of the Christian ministry; so also might the Church of the Donatists or of the Novatians or of the Greeks; but it was from none of these Churches that the Reformers received their ordination or succession, but from the Church of Rome, which they afterward denounced as antichrist. The succession which that Church held and transmitted to her bishops carried with it, like a river which holds in solution the soil of the country through which it flows, the doctrines of Rome; but these doctrines and this succession they discarded, and, falling back on the primal truth that they were called of God[1] to preach his word, they sought to establish a Church on New Testament principles.

[1] The Ordinal of Edward VI requires an *inward* call to the ministry.

This is what they themselves claimed, and not what modern High Church advocates claim for them.

Now, to imagine, as some would have us, that by some unknown method, by some metaphysical process, these Reformers eliminated the Roman character from the succession they received, and yet retained that succession, is scarcely worthy of serious thought. For the doctrine, thus denuded of its sacerdotal quality, thus deprived of the mystical grace in which its real value resides, is no longer the peculiar possession of any Church, but belongs to all. But in doing this the Reformers would be manufacturing a new succession, a kind which the Roman Church, which Anglicans assert has the succession, knew not nor possessed, and which was unknown to Christendom. Not more worthy of consideration is that stretch of the imagination which we are invited to accept, as if it was real and not a mere figment of the fancy, that the founders of the English episcopacy and ministry unlinked themselves from the corrupt succession of the sixteenth century and, going back fifteen hundred years, joined themselves to the Church of the apostolic or subapostolic age. To whom did they go? Who rose from the dead and placed his hands upon them? The attempt to think the reality exposes the absurdity of the idea.

The simple truth, lucid as a sunbeam, is that the succession which these godly Reformers were in and which they originally received was a true succession

coming down from Christ and his apostles, or it was not. If it was, then in rejecting it and all that it implied and which gave it a distinctive character, and in setting up instead of it a substitute of their own making, they did not possess true apostolical succession when founding the Church of England; and neither that Church nor its offshoot, the Protestant Episcopal Church, has that succession now. On the other hand, if the succession they were in and received was not true, then they did not receive real, genuine succession, nor did they transmit it to others; whence it follows, in either case, that the doctrine of apostolic succession, or the historic episcopate, so loudly claimed by Anglican bishops, and so little understood, it would seem, by Anglican writers, never did exist in the Church of England established by law.

Francis Mason endeavored with much ingenuity to preserve succession while denying the mystical grace conferred, and his argument has become the model on which later efforts of that kind are formed. That the nature of such attempts may be understood we present a specimen of Mason's reasoning, which is correct from the standpoint of evangelical principles, but, as will be seen, is utterly destructive to Anglican pretensions. The argument is in the form of a dialogue. Philodox, a Romanist, says:

> We have a Church and priesthood which derive their original from Christ; you can go no farther than Cranmer. Now, if

this were put to King Ptolemy or any other indifferent man, would he not give judgment for us against you?

To this Mason answers:

No; neither for your priesthood nor for your Church; not for the first, because the priesthood which the apostles conferred was only a power to minister the word and sacraments, which, being conveyed to posterity successively by ordination, is found at this day in some sort in the Church of Rome, in regard whereof you may be said to succeed the apostles, and Cranmer you, and we Cranmer, and consequently we also in this succeed the apostles as well as you. But besides this, which is the ordinance of God, you have added another thing, the imagination of your own brain, which you esteem the principal function of priesthood, to wit, a power to offer a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead. Now, how is it possible that in this you should succeed the apostles, seeing (as in due time shall be proved) they neither were such priests themselves nor ever by ordination delivered any such priesthood?

Thus, when brought to face the real question, does one of the ablest defenders of the English episcopacy surrender the whole High Church position. For, without again showing that this is substituting another succession, another ordination, for that which the Reformers received, what succession does Mason claim for the Church of England that does not equally belong to other Protestant Churches? If Cranmer, on Mason's reasoning, was in the succession, was not Luther, and Bucer, and Zwingle, and Calvin, and Knox, and all the leaders of the Presbyterians and their successors?

But those who coin the phrase "historic episcopate" as a substitute for the old term "apostolical

succession," putting the emphasis on the bare idea of episcopal succession and thereby diverting attention from, and avoiding the difficult and dangerous logical consequences of, all that is involved in the doctrine of "apostolical succession"—these advocates would deny that the Reformers named were equally in the succession with Cranmer for the reason that they were not bishops, were not ordained bishops by bishops, and therefore did not receive episcopal succession. But even this plea will not avail anything. For not only did the Roman Church deny any succession to the Reformers, and not only did these Reformers renounce all claim to succession from that Church—Cranmer himself regarding the king as the sole authority whence he derived his power to act as bishop—but they went farther and challenged the claim of Rome itself to uninterrupted episcopal succession. If these men did this—and there is abundant proof that they did—then it is evident that they did not believe in uninterrupted episcopal succession at all, and therefore they could not have intended to build, and did not build, the Church of England on the basis of any so-called historic episcopate. Ridley, bishop and martyr, denounced Rome in the fiercest language as the bawd of Babylon, the wicked limb of antichrist, a bloody wolf that made havoc of the prophets of God. Hooper, bishop and martyr, Archdeacon Philpot, and Archbishop Sandys all derided

Rome's succession. Bishop Pilkington denied that it was a true succession which godly men should reverence, and gives a list of the wicked popes, with their abominations, saying, "This is the goodly succession. . . . These be the successors and fathers. . . . God defend all good folk from all such doings," etc. Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's, Bancroft, Grindal, Whitaker all attacked Rome's claim to succession. Whitaker wrote:

> Faith is, as it were, the soul of the succession, which faith being wanting, the naked succession of persons is like a dead carcass without a soul.

Bishop Jewel also attacks the Roman succession with vigor and learning. Like Pilkington, with fine scorn for the arguments of his adversaries he draws out the long catalogue of popes who hang gibbeted on the pages of history for their crimes, and points to the list as "M. Harding's holy succession." And, lest it should be answered that the iniquities of these popes did not invalidate the power originally given, he assails the historical record itself and challenges his opponent to prove the first link in the long-drawn chain:

> Wherefore telleth us M. Harding this long tale of succession? Have these men their own succession in so safe record? Who was, then, the Bishop of Rome next by succession unto Peter? Who was the second? Who the third? Who the fourth? . . . Hereby it is clear that of the four first bishops of Rome M. Harding cannot certainly tell us who in order succeeded the other. And thus, talking so much of succession, they are not well able to blaze their own succession.

Stillingfleet, also referring to this Roman succession, says, "The succession here is muddy as the Tiber itself." And again, as if putting the question to sleep forever, he says:

> If the successors of the apostles by the confession of Eusebius are not certainly to be discovered, then what becomes of that unquestionable line of succession of the bishops' churches, with everyone's name set down in his order, as if the writer had been Clarencieux to the apostles themselves?

Such is the testimony of history in briefest form. How is it possible that such testimony, so varied, so extensive, and so positive, could ever have existed if, as Anglicans assert, the claims they now make were ever held by the Anglican communion prior to 1662, when the Ordinal was changed and the representatives of the Reformers and founders of the English Church were slit in the ear or branded on the cheek, while those who approached nearest to Rome were considered as the only true churchmen? None of the Reformers, neither Cranmer, nor Ridley, nor Latimer, nor Hooper, nor Jewel, nor Parkhurst, nor any of those who laid the foundations of the English Church could be regarded now as a good churchman. Had there been no Spanish Armada, the defeat of which annihilated the hopes of English Catholics and drove them by thousands into the Anglican Church, there never would have been witnessed the spectacle of excessive ritualism, priestly forms, and high episcopal assertions now, and since the influx of English Catholics into the national Church,

seen and heard in the Church of England and in the Protestant Episcopal communion.

But we have seen on what slender grounds these Anglican claims rest. We have shown from documents relied on by Anglican writers that the consecration of Matthew Parker, notwithstanding all the arguments in its favor, is, to say the least, extremely doubtful. Its validity is open to serious objection, and, therefore, all ordinations originating in that doubtful act cannot themselves be otherwise than doubtful. We have also seen that those who are said to have consecrated Parker could not themselves produce unquestionable credentials of their own ordination; that they neither believed in nor maintained the doctrine of the historic episcopate as now interpreted; that eminent bishops, martyrs, Reformers, and divines, not only did not hold to that doctrine, but expressly and persistently denied its truthfulness and necessity; and that the Church of England in her books of ecclesiastical authority, such as the Ordinal and the list of Articles of Religion, repudiated the doctrine now falsely attributed to her and wrongfully claimed by her teachers and divines. We have seen also that, even if the claim now made had any historical basis, the reception and transmission of apostolical succession by the founders of the English Church were, in the nature of things, an absolute impossibility if we are dealing with any real thing and not manufacturing

something out of airy nothing in the fancy fields of fiction.

We do not believe the evidence we have adduced can be set aside or that the conclusions we have reached can be destroyed. We are confident they will stand the test of keenest historical research; and every attempt to refute them will only strengthen the position we have taken, show the weakness of Anglican pretensions, and demonstrate the radical difference between the teachings of present-day High Churchism and the doctrines of the founders of the Church of England in the Reformation period.

The right, then, of the Church of England or of the Protestant Episcopal Church to lay down conditions of union with other Churches, to deny the validity of the ministry of those Churches, and thereby to leave them to the uncovenanted mercies of God—that right is nothing more than an arrogant assumption without foundation in Holy Scripture, in history, or in the character of their own ministry. Protestant imitations of papal assumptions have neither the dignity of antiquity nor the prestige of universality to commend them either to the conscience or the reason of men who cannot believe that the final happiness of untold millions depends on the certainty of Matthew Parker's consecration, or that in the run of the centuries there has been no break in the mystic flow of sacerdotal grace involved in apostolical succession. The ultimate and

inevitable consequence of all such assumptions is the opening of the well-defended gates to the Trojan horse. The undercurrent of the Churches making such claims is necessarily Romeward, by the momentum of ideas arising from the argument of authority. Between papalism and evangelical Christianity there is no logical middle ground, and the Protestant Church that arrays itself in the borrowed plumes of Rome, placing more emphasis on the things that are peculiarly Roman than on those things that are evangelical, may well take heed that its candlestick is not removed out of its place, or that it furnishes no modern illustration of the parable of the man who built his house upon the sand.

CHAPTER VII.

Methodist Orders—Outline Statement.

REASONING from the foregoing, it is necessary to consider what effect the conclusions reached may have upon the validity of Methodist orders. The first Protestant Episcopal Church established in the United States was the Methodist Episcopal Church.[1] Like the primitive Church, in the strictest sense, which began with the Roman empire and, overcoming all barriers, penetrated to its utmost bounds, Episcopal Methodism began its history with the birth of the American nation, and has grown with its growth till its amazing successes have become in a large degree the wonder of the modern Church. The splendid outburst of Tertullian in defense of Christianity against the opposers of his day might with little change be applied to the marvelous career of this organized revival of primitive Christianity: "We are but of yesterday, and we have filled every place among you—cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market places, the very camp, tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum; we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods."[2]

But notwithstanding the progress of this phase

[1] Organized December, 1784. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. xxxvii.

of evangelical Christianity, which from the beginning has been one of the most potent factors in the religious, political, social, and intellectual development of Western civilization, and notwithstanding the many evidences of divine approbation in the fulfillment of its mission, the legitimacy of its ministry, in common with the ministry of other Churches, has been a constant subject of controversy from the beginning of its history until now by writers of High Church proclivities and sturdy advocates of the so-called historic episcopate.

The arguments reiterated by this class of writers, as if they had never been disposed of, are that John Wesley, the founder of Methodism in England, never intended that the Methodists should become a distinct body from the Church of England; that Wesley never intended to institute episcopacy for the Methodists in the American States; that, if he did so intend and, in fact, did ordain Dr. Thomas Coke bishop or superintendent with that view, he, being simply a presbyter in the Church of England, possessed no authority for his act; and that, therefore, the ministry derived from such source is illegitimate and without mission or jurisdiction.

Nor are these the only lines of opposition. The previous argument we have pursued against the assumption of an historic episcopate can be, and doubtless will be, turned against us, at least in appearance; for if ministerial orders in the Church

of England, it will be said, rest upon such doubtful foundations as we have shown, then orders in the Methodist Episcopal Church are equally doubtful, since they were derived from a minister of the Church of England. Then, again, on the assumption that English orders are valid, or whether they are or are not, the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will be asserted, is invalid for the reason that the Church of England never gave John Wesley or any other presbyter authority to ordain. Further, it may be affirmed that the arguments which destroy the doctrine of the historic episcopate are equally destructive to the doctrine of an historic presbyterate, or uninterrupted succession of elders, and therefore authority is again wanting in the Methodist eldership. There have also been some able Methodist writers who have endeavored to shift the ground of Methodist orders and to place them in direct succession of acknowledged episcopal authority, by showing that Wesley was actually ordained to the episcopal office by Erasmus, a bishop of the Greek Church, of the diocese of Arcadia in the isle of Crete.

Evidently it is not our purpose to evade objections. We have intentionally stated the strongest possible reasons that, we think, have been, or can be, urged against Methodist orders. And this, we believe, is as it should be. To elaborate the commonplaces of ecclesiastical polity with which most

ordinarily well-informed persons are familiar, but avoiding those questions which are of genuine critical value and which students of religious history specially investigate, may be thought sufficient for those who are happily satisfied with the broadest generalizations, or who, through defective training or through erroneous conceptions of the question before us, may have very little interest in the subject. But such attempts can scarcely be considered worthy of the theme or helpful in any degree to its solution. The strongest objections to Methodist orders that can be formulated on historic or other grounds should be candidly stated and as honestly met; and the most critical investigation of the source, nature, and authority of those orders should be faithfully and logically pursued. Ingenious arguments in defense of any cause which have no foundation in reality, but depend solely for their convincing power on the constructive or artistic skill of the writer to arrange his material or to color facts otherwise inimical to his theory, can never be relied upon in the building of a structure intended to withstand the severest tests of hostile criticism. Such arguments, like the goodness of Ephraim and Judah, are as the morning cloud and the early dew; they soon pass away. Error in itself has no element of continuity. Truth alone abides forever. Therefore dubious principles, doubtful facts, and unwarranted inferences are discarded. They are not nec-

essary to uphold the validity of that ministry which, by its unparalleled successes under divine grace working through it to the salvation of countless multitudes, has demonstrated its divine authority; nor are they necessary to show, either from a scriptural or an historical standpoint, that that ministry is as valid as any ministry which ever existed or now ministers in Christendom. Nothing is of value that is not true.

There is no reason why any objection against Episcopal Methodist orders postulated by the Church of England or the Protestant Episcopal communion should be avoided. None such ever have been. The Methodist ministry at its origin held the same attitude toward the High Church principles of the Church of England that the founders of the Church of England did toward those same principles in the Church of Rome. Hence, every defense of their orders made by those Reformers against the attacks of the Roman Church is equally valid now in defense of Methodist orders against the assaults of the historic episcopate party in the Church of England or in the Protestant Episcopal Church. The historical parallel is complete. Over against the corruptions of papalism against which the Reformers struggled we may place the dead formality of the Church of England in the eighteenth century, its practical abandonment of its divine mission, and the almost universal diffusion of a coarse-grained ration-

alism which was eating out the heart of faith in the supernatural among the people of England. The exclusive claims of the Roman Church, its arrogant pretensions to a divinely constituted hierarchy, its confident appeal to antiquity, and its intolerance of all movements that questioned its history, its piety, or its authority were all mirrored in that *simulacrum* of a Church which sat in judgment on Methodists and denied the validity of their orders. If the Reformers denied apostolical succession to the Church of Rome, the founders of Methodism with equal reason denied it to the Church of England. For it could never be asserted that that Church possessed better claims to uninterrupted succession than the Church of Rome, from which it had severed itself in revolution. If the Reformers discarded all authority to preach the word of God and to administer the holy sacraments by virtue of their ministerial character derived exclusively from the Church of Rome as such, the fathers of Methodism did likewise relative to any power obtained by them from the Church of England as such and not belonging to them as ministers in the universal Church of God. If the Reformers who were the founders of the Church of England, having been cut off as schismatics by the Church which itself had proved false to its mission, fell back on the word of God as the sole authoritative criterion of Christian faith and practice and on the inher-

ent rights of faithful men in Christ Jesus, thus asserting their allegiance to the Gospel rather than subserviency to changeable human enactments, so also did the founders of Episcopal Methodism in the duties which devolved upon them, and for similar reasons. Rejecting the demands of canonical law, which law the founders of the Anglican hierarchy had themselves violated, and laying aside by the law of necessity the usages of ages, as the Reformers also did, "the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary," the founders of the Methodist episcopate went back of Church canons and customs and behind all slowly evolved theories of the necessity of episcopal ordination to the essential validity of the ministerial function, and vindicated their action by appeal to Holy Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church. If appeal to a general council is the inalienable right of the ministry, this appeal to Scripture and antiquity by the founders of Methodism can never be denied. Moreover, whatever right, power, faculty, or authority the founders of the Anglican Church possessed to revolt from the Church of Rome, that same right belonged to the fathers of Methodism to separate from the Church of England. And, whatever right, power, or authority, scriptural or ecclesiastical, William Barlow, Miles Coverdale, and John Hodgkins had to consecrate Matthew Parker Archbishop of Canterbury and thus establish an English episco-

pate, John Wesley and James Creighton also possessed the same right to ordain Thomas Coke Bishop of the Methodist Societies in the United States and thus establish a scriptural episcopate in the New World. If the consecrators of Parker obeyed the commands of their sovereign, the consecrator of Coke was obeying the urgent demands of a free and sovereign people who owed allegiance to no ecclesiastical authority, but to whom he owed special care and oversight. Whatever can be claimed for the Anglican episcopate that is essential to its validity cannot by any show of fact or principle of reason be denied to the Methodist episcopate.

It is wholly gratuitous, then, to assume that Episcopal Methodism is illegitimate in its origin. Its foundation is as solid as that on which is based the venerable Church of England. To that Church—and of course the same is true relative to the Protestant Episcopal denomination—Episcopal Methodism concedes no ministerial right, power, or faculty to preach the word and administer the sacraments which she does not with equal right claim for herself. Nor is Episcopal Methodism isolated from the catholic Church of God. All that is of the past in the lives and labors of apostles, prophets, teachers, and martyrs belongs to her. The hymns of the ages are hers; the theology of the earliest days is hers; reverent regard for decency and order in the service of the sanctuary, as is set forth

in the Ritual, is characteristic of her in the administration of the holy sacraments. Whatever historic connection the Church of England holds with the past through its founders Episcopal Methodism also holds through Wesley, who was as truly a connecting link with the English episcopate, he having been ordained by Archbishop Potter, as the English Reformers were with the Roman episcopate. Wesley certainly had the same right to ordain that the Reformers had. His ordination of Dr. Coke was as real as was William Barlow's consecration of Matthew Parker. The Methodist episcopate is therefore as truly historic as is that of the Anglican Church. For Methodist ordinations are not mere imitations of a real act. They are not pretended consecrations, nor are they mere blessings or inductions to office. Ordination in Episcopal Methodism is the solemn endowment of authority by the Church, acting through her authorized channels, for the functions of ministry in the Church of God. To the Church of Christ was this power given; and in the exercise of that power Methodism ordains bishops, elders, and deacons. This is her intention, and has been since the first bishop was ordained, or consecrated, by her authority, as is evidenced by her ordination formula: "The Lord pour upon thee the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God now committed unto thee by the authority of the Church through the imposition

of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Here, then, are the outlines of the subjects inviting our investigation. The authority of Mr. Wesley to ordain and to originate an episcopacy, and whether he intended to consecrate Dr. Coke to the episcopal office, will constitute the core of the examination. If it can be shown by unimpeachable evidence that Mr. Wesley did have authority, such authority as the founders of the Church of England asserted and claimed, then it will follow that Methodist orders are as valid as those of the Church of England, and that the historic episcopate is as much a fact in Episcopal Methodism as it is in the Anglican communion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Ordination of Wesley by a Greek Bishop.

IN defense of the historic episcopate Anglican writers have sometimes endeavored to trace the succession of English bishops, not through Rome, but, through Ephesus, directly to the apostle John.[1] It is a very daring feat, this attempted Ephesian succession, and is accomplished, with commendable skill, at the expense of history. Some Methodist writers have also labored to prove that the Rev. John Wesley, at the time he ordained Thomas Coke, D.C.L., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopalians in the United States, was himself a validly ordained bishop according to the rites of the Greek Church. The Methodist episcopate would therefore, in that event, be in direct succession to the apostles through the bishops and patriarchs of the Eastern Church, if it could be proved that that episcopacy preserved an unbroken continuity.

To such tactual succession, however, Episcopal Methodism has never laid claim; nor would assured possession of it be considered as any greater warrant

[1] Chapin, *Primitive Church*, p. 291. Comp. with Lingard, *History of England*, and Alzog, *Universal Church History*, English translation. See also Churton, *Early English Church*, pp. 17–19.

for the genuineness of her orders than the authority she has exercised from the beginning as a true member of the one universal body of Christ. What Dean Sutcliffe, an eminent champion of the Anglican Church in the days of Queen Elizabeth, affirmed in defense of that Church against the accusations of the Romanists may be now as confidently declared of Episcopal Methodism: "He [that is, his Roman opponent] asserts that we are destitute of the succession. And he thinks that we are terribly pressed by this argument, but without reason. For the external succession, which both heretics often have and the orthodox have not, is of no moment. Not even our adversaries themselves, indeed, are certain respecting their own succession, which they so greatly boast. But we are certain that our doctors have succeeded to the apostles and prophets and most ancient fathers." But since the ordination of Mr. Wesley by a Greek bishop has been again affirmed with some show of documentary proof, and that by writers whose opinions are entitled to respect, and since we are desirous of reaching the true ground for Mr. Wesley's authority, it is fitting, before we enter upon a consideration of the known facts concerning the validity of Methodist orders, to carefully examine the evidence in the case.

What are the facts? In 1763 Erasmus, a bishop in the Greek Church, of the diocese of Arcadia in

Crete, visited London and became acquainted with the Rev. John Wesley and many Methodist preachers. At that time the Methodist societies were in sore need of ordained ministers who might lawfully administer the sacraments. The Anglican bishops would do nothing. Not every preacher presented by Wesley for ordination could annotate a Greek tragedy or write a disquisition on rare exceptions in Latin syntax. Thousands throughout the kingdom were hungering for the bread of life and clamoring for the rites of religion. The intention of many preachers to step over legitimate bounds and to administer the sacred ordinances was prevented solely by the restraining influence of Wesley. But every day the pressure increased with the expansion of his work and the success of his preachers. At this juncture Mr. Wesley, who made a broad distinction between a preacher and a pastor, and deemed it sinful for an unordained person to exercise the functions of a consecrated minister applied to the visiting Greek bishop to ordain for him some of the preachers. The request was granted. But when this ordination became known the enemies of this new Reformation, fearful of the mighty impulse thus given, attacked Mr. Wesley and his ordained helpers with such virulence that one of those ordained severed himself from the Connection. Mr. Wesley himself was publicly taunted with having importuned without avail the Greek bishop to

ordain him to the episcopacy. Rev. Augustus M. Toplady, several years after the supposed event, which in some particulars recalls the ordination of Archbishop Parker, renewed the charge in public print and accused Wesley of having violated the oath of supremacy. "Did you not," he wrote, addressing Mr. Wesley, "strongly press this supposed Greek bishop to consecrate you a bishop, that you might be invested with a power of ordaining what ministers you pleased to officiate in your societies as clergymen?" Rev. Rowland Hill, another violent antagonist of that day, made a similar charge.

In addition to this evidence, an original letter by a Rev. Samuel A. Peters, of the Protestant Episcopal Church and at the date of the letter Bishop-elect of Vermont, has been adduced, with other testimony, by an able advocate of the Erasmian consecration.[1] This letter was written to the Rev. Samuel Coate, Presiding Elder of the Lower Canada District, and is here reproduced for due consideration:

CORLEARS HOOK, NEW YORK, *May* 11, 1809.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR: I was highly entertained yesterday at the Conference in John Street, at which presided the Right Rev. Francis Asbury, Bishop over the Methodist Churches in America, whose episcopal authority has been spoken against by some of the Episcopalians claiming authority under the Latin Church, who boldly deny the validity of Methodist episcopacy, and found their assertions on a point by no means certain—that the Rev. John Wesley was never more

[1] See *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January, 1878.

than a presbyter in the Church of England, and, of course, could not consecrate Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and others to a higher order than a presbyter.

I took it for granted that the said denial was made with a view to expose the Methodist bishops to the severity of the *Præmunire* Act of Henry VIII if the Methodists should prove that the Rev. John Wesley was consecrated a bishop in the Christian Church by Erasmus, a Greek bishop, and now bishop and successor of Titus, first Bishop of Crete. But if the Methodists do not come forward and prove Mr. Wesley to be a bishop according to the Greek Church, then the enemy will say the Methodist episcopacy is but a Latin presbytery.

Seeing a book entitled *An Enquiry into the Validity of Methodist Episcopacy*, and considering its artful tendency, I published a vindication of the Rev. Hugh Peters, and added a note which gives the origin of Methodist episcopacy in England. My design was to warn the Methodists to keep out of the reach of the English *Præmunire* Act, and to let their enemies vaunt over their own bold assertion rather than to expose to certain misery and death their pious and conscientious bishops, who would sooner run their heads against a burning mountain than usurp episcopacy.

Had I been present when Erasmus consecrated Mr. John Wesley a bishop in the Christian Church I would sooner broil on the gridiron with St. Lawrence than divulge it and prove it, so long as the English *Præmunire* Act exists as a pillar to support the hierarchy of the Church of England.

Dr. Seabury I introduced to Mr. John Wesley after the Archbishop of Canterbury refused to consecrate him Bishop of Connecticut, and Mr. Wesley would have consecrated him, and Dr. Seabury was willing to be consecrated by Mr. Wesley;[1] but Mr. Wesley, by the best advice, would not sign the letter of orders to Seabury as bishop in the Christian Church.

Then Dr. Horn, Bishop of Norwich, Dr. Barkley, and others

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[1] Seabury was the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury refused to ordain him for many reasons, some of a legal character, and because he was not known to be the choice of all the people.

advised Dr. Seabury to receive his consecration from the Jacobite bishops in Scotland, who are not State bishops, but were degraded from being lord bishops because they would not take the oath of allegiance to William III in 1688.

I pretend not to be in the secret of the consecration of Mr. John Wesley by Erasmus, but I am so convinced of the fact that I would as soon be consecrated a bishop in the Christian Church by Bishop Asbury, or ———, Bishop Coke, or ———, as by Dr. Sutton, Archbishop of Canterbury, or by Dr. Porteus, Lord Bishop of London. And that the *jure divino* of episcopacy from Erasmus came from St. John of Jerusalem, Rome and England admit; but Rome admits not the *jure divino* episcopacy in the Church of England.

The question still remains, Was Mr. John Wesley made a bishop by Erasmus, now Bishop of Crete? The answer is valid: John Wesley would not have acted as bishop if he had not been consecrated by Erasmus, nor would Dr. Coke, nor Mr. Asbury, etc. Thus believed Dr. Horn, Dr. Barkley, Charles Wesley, and hundreds of others who knew them as well as, reverend and dear brother,

Yours affectionately,

SAMUEL A. PETERS.

I am Bishop-elect of Ver(d)mont; should I ever go there or in Connecticut, I would solicit a consecration by a bishop in the line from Erasmus, in order to be free of error supposed to exist in the Latin Church.

The Rev. Mr. Coate, Pearl Street, New York.

The author of this letter is said to have been well known to several Methodist ministers, one of whom, it is said, has left the following fragment of a conversation held with Dr. Peters:

"Dr. Peters informed me that when Dr. Seabury was refused consecration by the bishop in England the said bishop told him he was prohibited by the law of the realm from consecrating him, but advised him to apply to Mr. Wesley for consecration. Dr.

Seabury replied, 'Is Wesley a bishop?' To which the bishop answered, 'We do not undertake to answer that question. It is not for us to determine. But apply to him; he can satisfy you and consecrate you.' Dr. Peters was present at the interview, and went with and introduced Dr. Seabury to Mr. Wesley, who was so far satisfied that he would have been willingly consecrated by him if Mr. Wesley would have signed his letter of orders as bishop, which Mr. Wesley could not do without incurring the penalty of the *Præmunire* Act. He would have signed as superintendent," etc.

Dr. Peters is also quoted as authority for the following: "A clergyman once asked Mr. Wesley, 'Were you consecrated bishop by Erasmus?' Wesley replied, 'Have you read the *Præmunire* Act?' 'Yes.' 'Would you have me answer you truly?' 'Yes, or not at all.' 'Then, under the circumstances, I cannot answer you.'" This is all the material evidence there is thus far to prove that Wesley was ordained bishop by Erasmus of Crete. Inferences there are many, such as those drawn from the autocratic sway of Wesley from this time, his respect for episcopal prerogatives, and from the fact that he never did categorically deny that he was ordained bishop by the Greek Bishop of Arcadia.

By his enemies Wesley was taunted with having sought episcopal ordination. But there is as

strong evidence at least that Wesley was ordained to the episcopacy by Erasmus as there is that William Barlow, the consecrator of Matthew Parker, was ever ordained Bishop of St. David's. The Elizabethan bishops, Jewel and others, were openly challenged to produce authority for the episcopacy they had usurped. The evidence, so far as it goes, is given by one who knew John Wesley. He also affirms that he is so confident that Wesley was made a bishop that he is willing to receive episcopal ordination from Coke or Asbury. According to his statements he was not the only one who believed as he did. Dr. Seabury, the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, is declared by this testator, who is at the date of this testimony Bishop-elect of Vermont, to have been willing to receive episcopal ordination from John Wesley. Dr. Peters also states that well-known and eminent persons believed that the ordination by Erasmus actually occurred. The conversations reported by him sound natural, granting the circumstances. And if it be said that he must have had a remarkably long memory to have recalled with such precision particular events and conversations of forty-five or forty-six years before the writing of this letter, it may be replied that such a feat of memory is no more astonishing than the extraordinary ability of the Earl of Nottingham, who is introduced as a witness by Anglicans, testifying that the Lambeth register pre-

sented to him for identification "was ye original he saw and read when Archbishop Parker was ordained" fifty-four years before.

Thus we have presented this evidence in the most favorable light. But, however probable from this evidence the ordination of Wesley may seem, we cannot admit the fact on this evidence alone. Stronger proof must be produced. The same rigorous method we employed in dealing with the documentary evidence in favor of Matthew Parker's consecration must be applied to this also. The unsupported statements of the letter must be weighed in the balance. The author of the letter must also be considered as to his trustworthiness, for nothing should be accepted as true that cannot withstand the Ithuriel touch of criticism.

Who, then, was this Rev. Samuel A. Peters? He was a minister of the Church of England in Hebron, Conn. In 1774 he went to England, and was in parochial charge in London for thirty years. Returning to the United States, he was elected Bishop of Vermont, but was not ordained, not through any fault of his, but for the reason, it is said, that the Episcopal Convention of Vermont had not signed the constitution of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He was considered by those who knew him—and some of these, as the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, were prominent in Methodist history—as a man of talent and of erudition.

Thus far he seems to be an important witness.

But historic truth forbids that he should hold that distinction. He was the author of the so-called "Blue Laws of Connecticut,"[1] and the character he bears as the author of a *History of Connecticut* utterly discredits his testimony in this or in any other case. The statements he makes in that history as sober truth can be equaled only by the impossibilities of Baron Munchausen.

Analysis of Peters's testimony proves its worthlessness:

1. His letter, if admitted in evidence at all, admits that he was not present when the ordination was performed, that he was not in the secret, and does not mention anyone who was. His information was probably absorbed from the same source from which Toplady and Rowland Hill drew theirs—a floating suspicion at the beginning, growing out of the ordination of Dr. Jones by Erasmus at Wesley's request, developed into a probability because of its possibility, and finally charged home as an accomplished fact.

2. There is no evidence that the persons mentioned as believing the summons really believed it. On the contrary, the Rev. Charles Wesley could never have given it credence, for he severely criticised his brother for consecrating Coke, since he

[1] For an account of him see Appleton's *Cyclopædia of American Biography;* Sprague's *Annals*, vol. v, pp. 191–200; also article on the Blue Laws in *Methodist Quarterly Review*, January, 1878.

was not himself a bishop, and had by his uncanonical act realized the Nag's Head fable concerning the consecration of Archbishop Parker.

3. Certain statements in the letter do not harmonize with the reported conversations. In the one we are told that Wesley refused because of the Act of *Præmunire* to admit to a clergyman that he had been ordained; but in the other he admits the fact to Dr. Seabury, and not only admits it, as he must have done in order to satisfy Seabury of his episcopal power, but is willing, according to this testimony, to ordain Dr. Seabury, provided the law can be evaded by the use of deceptive terms. Wesley did employ the term "superintendent" in the letter of orders for Dr. Coke; and, in addition to his dislike of the term "bishop" as an official designation among the Methodists, subjecting them to misunderstanding on the part of those who could not think of a bishop other than as a mighty lord over God's heritage, he may have used it as a matter of prudence, in order that his enemies might have no possible chance to bring him within the clutch of the law. His use of the term "superintendent," in his letter of orders for Dr. Coke, could in no wise be deceptive, for that word, the Latin for the Greek ἐπίσκοπος, meant precisely what he intended Coke to be—a scriptural bishop, and not a bishop according to the idea of a bishop then prevalent. But he could not employ that same term in a letter of orders for

Seabury—for that was not wholly what Seabury meant or desired—without being deceptive and without violating the law by a technical evasion.

The Wesley of Peters is not the Wesley of Methodism. If there was any radiant virtue shining brighter than another in the character of that saintly man it was his unfeigned sincerity. His was a nature that ever sought reality, as strong natures ever do, and as sensitively shunned the shadowy and illusive. He was not immaculate. He was not infallible. It is true that all the moral or immoral possibilities of human nature are unknown to us, and that only those who live an unreflective life on the surface of things, sublimely unconscious of the unfathomable depths beneath, can ever affirm with unshaken confidence what they would do or would not do in every circumstance amid the entanglements of our complex life. We sometimes change places with circumstance, and he who is the master one day is a slave the next. But here we are dealing with no ordinary man. Great men are like mountains—they must be looked at from a distance in order to be seen. The softening haze of time tones down the crude, everyday conventionalisms which reduced them while living to the uniformity of a dead level with their fellows, and magnifies those qualities which won for them an epitaph in history. It is so with Wesley. Few men probably have ever lived who combined in themselves greater

gifts, both spiritual and intellectual, of a certain kind, or who employed those gifts to more practical or more beneficent ends. He was not a Newton, nor was he called to exercise his powers on a lofty scale in the cabinets of diplomacy. But in him was the genius of a Richelieu, the organizing power and sublime abnegation of self in obedience to a dominant idea characteristic of Loyola, the heroism of a Luther, the mildness of a Melanchthon, and the spiritual fervor of a Kempis. He was a man sent from God, a marked product of a special providence. We cannot, therefore, imagine, while yet leaving a margin for the play of sinful forces in human nature, that Wesley is truthfully represented in this letter of the Rev. Dr. Peters. Living, as he did, in daily communion with God and in the happy assurance of the witness of the Holy Spirit, such subterfuges and unworthy devices are unthinkable. Psychology has some relation to history.

Further, we have Wesley's own denial of the charges made by Toplady and the Rev. Rowland Hill. Thomas Olivers, with Wesley's consent, replied to the former, and denied without qualification that Mr. Wesley ever requested Erasmus to ordain him bishop.[1]

To the latter Mr. Wesley himself replied: "I never entreated anything of Bishop Erasmus, who had abundant unexceptional credentials as to his epis-

[1] Tyerman, *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii, pp. 488, 489.

copal character. Nor did he 'ever reject any overture' made by me. Herein Mr. Hill has been misinformed. I deny the fact; let him produce his evidence."[1]

This explicit denial, however, is not considered by some as necessarily closing the case. Wesley, it is argued, did not deny that he was ordained, but only the strictly literal statement that Erasmus rejected his overtures. And if we hold by the exact letter of the text, as Shylock does by his bond, this is certainly correct. Wesley, indeed, does not say with critical precision and verbal exactness that he was not ordained by Erasmus. He may never have, in strict etymological definition of words, "entreated" anything of Erasmus; and so far as the literal record is concerned he may have simply asked without entreating, and Erasmus may have complied. He was not charged, it is urged, with having been ordained, but with having entreated ordination, and Wesley denied that only which was charged. If he was not ordained, why did he not in distinct terms deny that fact? By such reasonings the inference is drawn that Mr. Wesley was actually ordained to the episcopacy by the Greek Bishop of Arcadia.

Is there solid ground for the inference? We think not. To the clear intellect and quick moral sense of Wesley all such reasoning would have been nothing more than paltry quibbling. If he

[1] Wesley, *Works*, vol. vi, p. 196.

had been ordained, of what value would a mere play upon words have served in the conflict with his adversaries? True, he does not expressly say, "I was not ordained," but only that he did not entreat Erasmus for anything. But in denying that does he not in simple truth deny all that it implied, and not only that he desired to be ordained bishop? He did not fail of ordination because the episcopal authority of Erasmus was doubtful, for he says that that bishop had "abundant unexceptional credentials as to his episcopal character." Nor did he fail because Erasmus refused to ordain him. He failed in no sense in anything, for the reason that he neither entreated nor desired anything of Erasmus. Nothing need be plainer than that. He unequivocally says, in reply to Rowland Hill, "I deny the fact; let him produce his evidence." Suppose Rowland Hill could, by testimony obtained from Erasmus or otherwise, have proved that Wesley was ordained bishop, as was possible if Wesley had been so ordained, would Wesley's technical denial that he had never "entreated" Erasmus have been of any avail in the judgment of the world? The moral sense of mankind would have condemned the finely drawn distinction of the casuist and despised the moral cowardice of the carpet reformer. Wesley was not deficient in ethical discrimination. The denial of the fact charged, which charges assume that the greater act was not accomplished, carried

with it a denial of the whole thing—ordination, rejection of ordination, rejection of request for ordination. On the strength of that denial Mr. Hill was invited to produce his evidence, which he never did, as Wesley knew he never could.

Again, of what value could such an ordination have been to Mr. Wesley? He knew as well before the ordination as, it is asserted, he did after that the *Præmunire* Act of Henry VIII was still in force. He knew that he could never exercise episcopal function in the realm of England without subjecting himself, and those connected with him in the Methodist movement, to the severe penalties of that act, and that it could only bring disaster without any compensating benefit. But, it is said, by virtue of episcopal ordination he would have been enabled, in harmony with his lifelong belief in episcopal authority, to consecrate ministers for the Methodist Societies in Scotland and America. Why, then, in 1780 did he apply to the Bishop of London to ordain for him even one minister for America if he himself had been ordained bishop? And why, when he did consecrate such ministers four years after, did he not base his authority for the act on the fact of his own ordination by this successor of Titus, the first Bishop of Crete?

Never in a single instance does he appeal to any authority or power of order derived from Erasmus. But, like the Reformers who founded the Church of

England and, without lawful episcopal authority, originated the Anglican episcopacy, his appeal was to the New Testament and the earliest practice of the primitive Church. On that sure foundation and his providential call he based his authority for the greatest act of life.

A critical estimate, then, of the evidence in the case places the ordination of Wesley by Erasmus in the same category with the ordination of William Barlow. Neither of them can be proved, but both are disproved by the testimony adduced to establish the fact.

CHAPTER IX.

Episcopal Ordination of Dr. Coke.

IN September, 1784, the Rev. John Wesley, assisted by a presbyter of the Church of England and two other elders, ordained by solemn imposition of hands the Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke to the episcopal office. Advocates of the historic episcopate deny the validity of that ordination as vigorously as the Greek and Roman Churches deny the validity of Anglican orders. The uncanonical character of the act is not emphasized, for that would condemn the uncanonical proceedings of some Anglican ordinations; and for this other reason, that, while uncanonically conferred orders are regarded as irregular, they are not therefore on that account essentially invalid. The objection to Methodist orders is founded on the assumed lack of authority in Mr. Wesley, and on the further fact, as is supposed, that Mr. Wesley did not intend to consecrate Dr. Coke bishop, but only designed by a solemn and fitting service to set him apart to an indefinite superintendency or oversight of the Methodist societies in North America. Absurd as this attempt may seem to charge the founders of Methodism in

the United States either with having entered into a sacrilegious conspiracy to snatch episcopal power by deliberate misconstruction of Wesley's act, or as having been so deficient in common sense and in elementary knowledge of ecclesiastical forms and usages, notwithstanding they belonged to the Church of England, that they did not comprehend the significance of Dr. Coke's consecration, ignorantly assuming that Wesley intended episcopacy when he did not, yet such objection has been the standing argument of Anglicans from the beginning of Episcopal Methodism until now, and has even sometimes appeared, though in modified form, in the works of Methodist writers on our ecclesiastical polity both in this country and in England.

In the investigation of this subject we have before us the act, the intention of the act, and the authority for the act. That the act of ordination was performed, or that some ceremony was held by which Mr. Wesley gave some special authority to Dr. Coke to exercise ordaining and supervisory powers over Methodist societies in North America, is not disputed. On this point all are agreed, and we need not encumber the subject with needless discussion. The authority for the act may be considered later, when it is clearly understood what the act was; for unless we apprehend the real nature of the act itself the question of authority is an indifferent matter. We have, then, before us the simple

question, Did Mr. Wesley intend to ordain the Rev. Dr. Coke a bishop for the Methodists in the United States?

In order to reach a solution of this question in the light of Anglican objections, which conclusion shall be in harmony with all the facts in the case, it will be necessary to consider, though briefly, the material circumstances out of which the ordination grew.

For a period of some forty years prior to the consecration of Dr. Coke Mr. Wesley had abandoned the High Church principles of ministerial orders which he once held with reverent loyalty. In his early days he believed in three divinely established orders, in apostolical succession, in the supreme authority of bishops, and that no one had the right to administer the holy sacraments without permission from bishops in direct succession from the apostles. In 1746 his views underwent a change. The character of the work in which he had been engaged and the extraordinary developments of it in all parts of the kingdom broadened his sympathies, and gradually led him in various ways to look beyond the narrow ecclesiasticism in which his prejudices had been nurtured and to examine seriously the reasons for dissenting belief and practice. On a journey to Bristol, this same year, he read a work on Church government by an eminent Dissenter, Peter King, Lord High Chan-

cellor of England, entitled *An Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity, and Worship of the Primitive Church.* The principles enunciated in that little book with clearness, and strongly supported by Scripture and patristic citations, were that a presbyter is a person in holy orders, having thereby an inherent right to perform the whole office of a bishop; that bishops and presbyters are of the same order, but differ in degree; and that, therefore, though a presbyter by his ordination has as ample inherent right and power to discharge all clerical offices as any bishop, yet peace, unity, and order oblige him not to invade the privileges granted to bishops by custom of the Church.

The argument of Lord King made a profound impression on the mind of Wesley. In his Journal, under date of January 20, 1746, he writes:

> I set out for Bristol. On the road I read over Lord King's account of the primitive Church. In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draft; but, if so, it would follow that bishops and presbyters are (essentially) of one order, and that originally every Christian congregation was a church independent of all others.

He also read Stillingfleet's *Irenicon.* The conclusions reached in that work were that Christ did not determine the form of Church government by positive laws; that episcopacy was lawful, but not necessary; that bishops and presbyters were of the same order; and that the founders of the

Church of England did not hold to the divine right of episcopacy. The influence of these works on the views of Wesley is visible in the Conferences he held with his preachers and in his correspondence with various persons on the subject. The year after the reading of Lord King's work the whole question of Church government was gone over in the Conference at London, and the conclusion reached that no binding form of government for the Church was laid down in the New Testament. Nine years later his convictions are the same. July 3, 1756, he writes to a minister in the Church of England:

> As to my own judgment, I still believe "the episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolical;" I mean, well agreeing with the practice and writings of the apostles. But that it is prescribed in Scripture I do not believe. This opinion, which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicon*. I think he has unanswerably proved that "neither Christ nor his apostles prescribe any particular form of Church government, and that the plea of divine right for diocesan episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive Church."[1]

Apostolical succession vanishes in the presence of such beliefs. Over his own signature, February 19, 1761, Wesley wrote: "I deny that the Romish bishops came down by uninterrupted succession from the apostles. I never could see it proved, and I am persuaded I never shall."[2] This signified a denial also of uninterrupted succession in the An-

[1] Wesley, *Works*, vol. vii, p. 284, Letter to Rev. Mr. Clarke.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 90.

glican Church, and that Wesley had at that date forever broken with the doctrine of the divine right of episcopacy. His declaration years afterward to his brother, Charles Wesley, "The uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable which no man ever did or can prove," was only the expression of a belief held for forty years previously.

Lord King in his account of the primitive Church had said: "As for ordination, I find but little said of this in antiquity; yet, as little as there is, there are clearer proofs of the presbyters ordaining than there are of their administering the Lord's Supper;" and he quotes Firmilian, in his Epistle to Cyprian: "All power and grace is constituted in the Church, where seniors preside who have the power of baptizing, confirming, and ordaining." In June, 1780, Mr. Wesley, referring to some doubts and prudential observations of his brother Charles, writes:

> Read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicon*, or any impartial history of the ancient Church, and I believe you will think as I do. I verily believe I have as good a right to ordain as to administer the Lord's Supper. But I see abundant reasons why I should not use that right, unless I was turned out of the Church. At present we are just in our place.

Such were Wesley's beliefs concerning Church government and ministerial orders, from 1746 to 1780, a period of thirty-four years, comprising the most vigorous and the most intellectually active period of his long and laborious life. Four years later he put those beliefs into practice.

Let us summarize those beliefs: 1. No form of government is prescribed in Scripture binding perpetually on all Churches. 2. Episcopal government is agreeable to Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church. 3. Uninterrupted succession of a series of episcopally ordained bishops from the days of the apostles is a fable. 4. There are not three distinct and divinely constituted orders in the Christian ministry. 5. Bishops and presbyters are essentially one and the same order. 6. Presbyters, by virtue of their order, have inherent right to perform all the functions of a bishop—to baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, and to ordain. 7. John Wesley was a presbyter; he therefore had the same inherent right to ordain as to administer the Lord's Supper.

We may now consider another array of facts. For many years prior to the ordination of Dr. Coke, Mr. Wesley was importuned by the preachers in America to send them ordained ministers who might administer the ordinances of religion to the thousands who were like sheep in the wilderness. For legal reasons Mr. Wesley refused. The colonies were under the spiritual jurisdiction of the Bishop of London. Respect for the canons of his Church and for the most ancient canons of the universal Church, as those of Niceæ and Antioch, restrained him from violating the rights lawfully held by another. But the condition of the Methodists in America grew worse. The situation was becoming

critical; strife, schism, and other evils were beginning to undermine the marvelous work of God. The future of Methodism was full of anxiety and gloom. Mr. Wesley was again appealed to, for to him the Methodists looked as the only one whom all would obey. In his profound solicitude for the sheep without a shepherd he addressed two letters to Dr. Lowth, Bishop of London, requesting him to ordain even one preacher who might minister to the necessities of the people. The only reply he received was, "There are three ministers in that country already." Wesley answered: "What are three to watch over all the souls in that extensive country? . . . I mourn for poor America, for the sheep scattered up and down therein. Part of them have no shepherds at all, particularly in the northern colonies; and the case of the rest is little better, for their own shepherds pity them not."

As the American colonies, through the obstinacy of George III, were lost forever to the English crown, so through the short-sighted policy of the Anglican bishops and the favor of Heaven the Methodists of the United States were forever lost to the Church of England.

The triumph of the American arms in the war for independence dissolved all ecclesiastical bonds that united the colonial Church to Anglican authority. The jurisdiction formerly maintained was lost; the Church itself became extinct. This providential

state of affairs left Wesley no alternative. Whatever reasons he might have alleged years before for refraining from ordaining helpers were baseless now. The way was cleared for him, by a providential chain of events over which he had no control, to exercise the inherent rights he possessed to provide for these people, and that without violating either the laws of his country or invading the jurisdiction of the English bishops. The time had come for him to act, and he resolved to delay no longer. Here, then, are the two reasons for this momentous event—the beliefs of Wesley, and the extraordinary demands made upon him. These two conditions met; what was the outcome?

In February, 1784, Mr. Wesley held a private conference with the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., a presbyter of the Church of England, whose gifts, grace, and usefulness had already distinguished him among Methodist preachers and had commended him to Mr. Wesley as a suitable person to take care of the difficult and responsible work beyond the sea. In his private chamber Wesley introduced the subject in substance as follows:

> That, as the revolution in America had separated the United States from the mother country forever, and the episcopal establishment was utterly abolished, the societies had been represented to him in a most deplorable condition. That an appeal had also been made to him through Mr. Asbury, in which he was requested to provide for them some mode of Church government suited to their exigencies; and that, having long

and seriously revolved the subject in his thoughts, he intended to adopt the plan which he was now about to unfold. That, as he had invariably, in every step he had taken, to keep as closely to the Bible as possible, so, on the present occasion, he hoped he was not about to deviate from it. That, keeping his eye upon the conduct of the primitive Churches in the ages of unadulterated Christianity, he had much admired the mode of ordaining bishops which the Church of Alexandria had practiced. That, to preserve its purity, that Church would never suffer the interference of a foreign bishop in any of their ordinations; but that the presbyters of that venerable apostolic Church, on the death of a bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body by the laying on of their own hands; and that this practice continued among them for two hundred years, till the days of Dionysius. And finally, that, being himself a presbyter, he wished Dr. Coke to accept ordination from his hands, and to proceed in that character to the continent of America to superintend the societies in the United States.[1]

This proposition was listened to with surprise and received with hesitation. Dr. Coke frankly expressed his doubts as to Wesley's authority to confer valid ordination. Wesley referred him to the arguments of Lord King, and gave him time for deliberation. In less than two months Dr. Coke informed Mr. Wesley that he was ready to receive ordination at his hands and to cooperate with him in the great work:

HONORED AND DEAR SIR: The more maturely I consider the subject the more expedient it appears to me that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you, by the imposition of your hands.[2]

The result was that Wesley wrote Dr. Coke to come to Bristol and to bring with him the Rev.

[1] Drew, *Life of Dr. Coke*, pp. 71, 72.
[2] Moore, *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii, p. 276.

Mr. Creighton, a regularly ordained presbyter of the Church of England. Accordingly, the doctor and Mr. Creighton met him at Bristol. With their assistance he ordained Mr. Richard Whatcoat and Mr. Thomas Vasey presbyters for America; and, being peculiarly attached to every rite of the Church of England, did afterward ordain Dr. Coke a superintendent, giving him letters of ordination under his hand and seal.[1]

The ordination, it may be affirmed, was according to the ritual prepared by Mr. Wesley for the Methodists in America. Wesley was "peculiarly attached to every rite of the Church of England." The Book of Common Prayer used by that Church was adapted by him—he having, as he wrote in the Preface, made "little alteration" in it—to the requirements of the American Church. This Book of Common Prayer, under the title, *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in the United States of America, with Other Occasional Services*, was brought by Dr. Coke to the first General Conference and adopted by the Methodist Episcopal Church then organized. The Preface to this *Sunday Service*, signed by John Wesley, is dated "Bristol, September 9, 1784," that is, seven days after the ordination of Dr. Coke. This *Service* contained forms for the ordination of superintendent, elders, and deacons, similar to the ordination

[1] Coke and Moore, *Life of Wesley*, p. 459.

forms of the English Prayer Book. For the word "bishop" in that book Wesley substituted its Latin equivalent superintendent, and for "priests" he used the word "elders."

Of the letters of ordination above mentioned the following is a faithfully transcribed copy by Mr. Drew from the original in Mr. Wesley's own handwriting:

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, JOHN WESLEY, LATE FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE IN OXFORD, PRESBYTER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, SENDETH GREETING: Whereas many of the people in the southern provinces of North America, who desire to continue under my care and still adhere to the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, are greatly distressed for want of ministers to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the usage of the same Church, and whereas there does not appear to be any other way of supplying them with ministers, know all men that I, John Wesley, think myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America. And therefore, under the protection of Almighty God and with a single eye to his glory, I have this day set apart as a superintendent by the imposition of my hands and prayer (being assisted by other ordained ministers) Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, a presbyter of the Church of England and a man whom I judge to be well qualified for that great work. And I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern as a fit person to preside over the flock of Christ. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-four. JOHN WESLEY.

Over two weeks elapsed before Dr. Coke, with his companions, sailed for the United States. Dur-

ing this interval Mr. Wesley prepared the following letter, which Dr. Coke was directed to print and circulate among the societies on his arrival:

BRISTOL, *September* 10, 1784.

TO DR. COKE, MR. ASBURY, AND OUR BRETHREN IN NORTH AMERICA: By a very uncommon train of providences many of the provinces of North America are totally disjoined from the mother country and erected into independent States. The English government has no authority over them, either civil or ecclesiastical, any more than over the States of Holland. A civil authority is exercised over them, partly by the Congress, partly by the provincial assemblies. But no one either exercises or claims any ecclesiastical authority at all. In this peculiar situation some thousands of the inhabitants of these States desire my advice, and in compliance with their desire I have drawn up a little sketch.

Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me many years ago that bishops and presbyters are the same order and have consequently the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace' sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belonged.

But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish minister; so that for some hundreds of miles together there is none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end, and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest.

I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them, by baptizing and administering the Lord's Supper. And I have prepared a liturgy, little differing

from that of the Church of England (I think the best constituted national Church in the world), which I advise all the traveling preachers to use on the Lord's day in all the congregations, reading the Litany only on Wednesdays and Fridays, and praying extempore on all other days. I also advise the elders to administer the Supper of the Lord on every Lord's day.

If anyone will point a more rational and scriptural way of feeding and guiding these poor sheep in the wilderness I will gladly embrace it. At present I cannot see any better method than that I have taken.

It has, indeed, been proposed to desire the English bishops to ordain part of our preachers for America. But to this I object: 1. I desired the Bishop of London to ordain one, but could not prevail. 2. If they consented we know the slowness of their proceedings; but the matter admits of no delay. 3. If they would ordain them now they would expect to govern them. And how grievously would this entangle us! 4. As our American brethren are now totally disentangled, both from the State and the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free.

JOHN WESLEY.

Thus was completed the act which had been contemplated by Wesley for years.

Anglican writers here step in and assert that Wesley did not intend to formally ordain Dr. Coke; that the service at most was but a solemn form of appointment to a special work of a supervisory nature. Some Methodist writers, both English and American, have also ventured a similar opinion. But to him who has no preconceived theory to sustain, and is desirous only of the truth

as that may be reached by patient study of the facts, the inevitable question arises, If Mr. Wesley did not intend to ordain Dr. Coke to the episcopal office why all this hesitation, deliberation, discussion, study of Scripture, and prolonged research in Church history and practice of primitive times? Simply to find out whether a man could be sent on a tour of inspection? If, after all this searching of the Scriptures, this study of King and Stillingfleet, these discussions in Conferences, and these letters to his brother and friends, Wesley intended to appoint Dr. Coke only to an office such as a presiding eldership or a secretaryship, then truly the mountains were in labor and a ridiculous mouse was born.

Dr. Coke was already a presbyter and had power to administer the sacraments without any authority from Wesley. But Wesley ordained him. To what, then, could he ordain if not for the episcopal office? Why was Mr. Creighton, a regular presbyter in the English Church, invited to assist in the ceremony with other ordained elders? Wesley gave Coke authority to consecrate Francis Asbury to the same office with himself, and provided him and his successors for that service with a form of ordination taken from the Ordinal of the Church of England. But why ordain Asbury to this office if Coke was not ordained? Are we to suppose that Mr. Wesley would send a presbyter to America

with letters of episcopal orders in his pocket, with a form for ordaining others to the same office, and with a commission to really ordain others, if he had not conferred authority upon that presbyter? Let us look a little closer. Dr. Coke ordained Mr. Asbury three times. Now, if the setting apart of Dr. Coke was not an ordination in the true meaning of that term, how could Coke's ordination of Mr. Asbury the third time make him a bishop, as he was understood to be, and so accepted, by all the ministers present at the Christmas Conference when they formed themselves into the Methodist Episcopal Church? Again, if Coke's ordination of Asbury the third time did not make him a bishop, how could Coke's ordination of him the first time, or the second time, make him a deacon or an elder? If the second ordination made him an elder, what did the third make him? He who had the power to ordain him to one degree had the power to ordain him to all three degrees. If he could not ordain to all three, then clearly he could not ordain him to any. If Asbury, then, was not a bishop by virtue of his third ordination, then he was not an elder or a deacon by virtue of his first or second ordination. The validity of all three rests on the fact that Dr. Coke was himself formally ordained to the episcopal office.

That Mr. Wesley deliberately intended to consecrate Dr. Coke to the office of a bishop—there is no

need to contend about names, since all are agreed that superintendent, bishop, overseer signify the same thing—is demonstrable from the following:

1. In the letter of ordination given to Dr. Coke Mr. Wesley recommends Dr. Coke as a fit person "to preside over the flock of Christ." But this is the purpose, with all that it implies, for which the Church of England ordained bishops. And it must be borne in mind that Dr. Coke was to preside over those who still desired to adhere to the "doctrine and discipline of the Church of England," a Church which had become extinct in the United States, but the form of government of which, modified by the practice and ideas of the primitive Church, Wesley desired they should still maintain.

2. At the close of his letter to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, etc., Wesley writes, "They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church." The teaching of Scripture, according to Wesley's understanding, was that bishops and presbyters were of the same essential order, and that therefore presbyters had inherent right to ordain. The practice of the primitive Church, as he had learned from Lord King, was a modified episcopacy. This the Methodists were to follow if they chose.

3. Wesley on these same grounds believed himself to be, not an English or a Roman bishop, but a truly scriptural bishop; and therefore, so far as the essence of the idea of episcopacy was concerned, and not

the unessential accidents of the same, he affirmed himself to be as really a bishop as any in England or the world. As such he claimed the power, as he asserted in a letter to his brother Charles, to exercise the functions of an ἐπίσκοπος. Referring to Coke's ordination, he expressly declares in the Conference Minutes of 1786: "Judging this to be a case of real necessity, I took a step which, for peace and quietness, I had refrained from taking for many years—I exercised that power which I am fully persuaded the great Shepherd and Bishop of the Church has given me." But why should he refrain to appoint to a mere supervisory office? Was this all that the great Shepherd and Bishop had given him? There was no law against that. He himself had been acting as sole bishop from the beginning, and Asbury had been for years exercising the office of superintendent or general assistant with his consent.

4. That he did intend to consecrate Coke bishop is further seen from his conversation with Dr. Coke prior to the ordination. Dr. Coke represents him as saying that he "had much admired the mode of ordaining bishops which the Church of Alexandria had practiced; . . . that the presbyters of that venerable apostolic Church, on the death of a bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body by the laying on of their own hands; . . . that, being himself a presbyter, he wished Dr. Coke to accept ordination from his hands and to proceed

in that character to the continent of America to superintend the societies in the United States." But what possible connection can anyone see between this reference to the mode of making bishops in the Alexandrian Church as a ground for proposed action and a mere appointment or assignment to a temporary office? Why should Dr. Coke doubt Wesley's authority to appoint him to an office? He had assigned him to particular duties before, and Dr. Coke never seems to have had any doubt of his authority to do so. Further, why should it take Dr. Coke nearly two months to be convinced that Wesley really had the authority to assign him to an office? And, again, when it finally did penetrate his intellect that Wesley could really appoint a preacher to an office, why was Coke so dull of comprehension that he should write to Mr. Wesley, "The more maturely I consider the subject the more expedient it appears to me that the power of ordaining others should be received by me from you by the imposition of your hands?" What relation has all this to a mere appointment to an office? And lastly, why should Mr. Wesley take advantage of this deplorable ignorance and misapprehension of Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, to set him apart to a mere temporary office, when Dr. Coke, on the strength of previous interviews and study, imagined all the while that he was being ordained bishop as a bishop in the Alexandrian Church was ordained

by the Alexandrian presbyters? Did Wesley intend to deceive Coke? Or was Coke so stupid that he did not understand Wesley? Or did he wickedly distort, pervert, and falsify Wesley's words and thus, impelled by unhallowed ambition, usurp episcopal authority? Surely a denial of the episcopal ordination of Dr. Coke involves more than we care to maintain.

Some writers endeavor to evade the difficulties by suggesting that Coke desired some special authority but no real episcopal ordination. Tyerman, for example, says: "Wesley meant the ceremony to be a mere formality, likely to recommend his delegate to the favor of the Methodists in America." But this is no explanation of the interview between Coke and Wesley relating to the ordination of bishops by presbyters in the Alexandrian Church. And if it is true what Tyerman, in the teeth of all the facts, says was all that Wesley meant, what, then, did Wesley further mean by sending forms for ordaining superintendents, elders, and deacons by this same delegate? Were such ordinations, beginning with Asbury's, to be merely a repetition of the same formality for the purpose of commending Asbury and other ministers to their own people?

Such explanations, it is evident, explain nothing. We are hemmed in by the logic of facts. Either Wesley did intend to consecrate Coke to the episcopacy and Coke did so understand him, or we

must admit both the duplicity of Wesley and the stupidity of Coke. But Dr. Coke was not the only stupid person. Charles Wesley, Asbury, and all the American preachers suffered at the same time from the same form of delusion. John Wesley not only deceived Coke, he deceived his brother Charles Wesley, also Mr. Moore, Dr. Adam Clarke, Rev. Richard Watson, the ministry of the Church of England, and the whole world—and for what?

We may now inquire, Did Dr. Coke purposely misconstrue the act of Wesley in setting him apart to the office of a superintendent or bishop? What are the facts that will help us in reaching the truth in this matter? Let us consider the following grouping of facts:

First. The Rev. Dr. Coke arrived in the United States in due time and communicated his mission. The preachers of the Methodist societies were called to meet in General Conference at Baltimore. The Conference opened December 24. In open session the letter of Mr. Wesley to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, etc., was read, and the Methodist societies, by the unanimous vote of the preachers present, were formed into one organization, the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Minutes of that Conference state that this was done in accordance with the advice of Mr. Wesley. Dr. Coke was received as superintendent or bishop by the Conference, that body being fully satisfied respecting the validity of

his "episcopal orders." The *Book of Sunday Service* was adopted. Dr. Coke then ordained Francis Asbury, first deacon, then elder or presbyter, and then superintendent or bishop, according to the forms of ordination which Wesley had given him and which had been adopted by the General Conference assembled.

Second. The Conference closed January 1, 1785. The Minutes of the Conference were published by Dr. Coke, under the title *The General Minutes of the Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church.* On June 3, 1785, Dr. Coke sailed for England, and was present with Mr. Wesley at the next session of the British Conference in London. The General Minutes Dr. Coke took with him to England and had them reprinted under Mr. Wesley's own eye. In those Minutes it was stated what had been done at the Conference in Baltimore, who had been ordained, and the fact that the Methodist Episcopal Church had been organized with Mr. Wesley's consent and by his provision: "Following the counsel of Mr. John Wesley, who recommended the episcopal mode of Church government, we thought it best to become an episcopal Church." Against that declaration Mr. Wesley uttered no protest. The Minutes were published with his sanction.[1] How, then, could Dr. Coke

[1] On this whole subject see Emory's *Defense of Our Fathers*, pp. 73, 74.

have misconstrued, intentionally or otherwise, the act of Mr. Wesley, when Wesley approves all that Dr. Coke had done as the result of that act?

Third. Charles Wesley, having heard what had been done in America, spoke of "Dr. Coke's Methodist Episcopal Church" with alarm mingled with disdain, and referred with natural High Church amazement to his "brother's consecration of a bishop." Surely now, if ever, Mr. Wesley will speak out and declare that his ordination of Dr. Coke was misinterpreted; that he did not "ordain" him, but only "set him apart;" did not commission him by virtue of that act to so ordain others; did not furnish a revision of the Anglican Ordinal for use in such ordinations: and did not desire or intend the organization of the Methodists in America on the basis of Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church. Mr. Wesley did nothing of the kind. His only reply was, "Dr. Coke did nothing rashly." But how could he have said this if Dr. Coke had misinterpreted his act, if Coke had played Prometheus to Wesley's fire? Dr. Coke was himself attacked. His reply was that he had done nothing without the authority of Mr. Wesley. No one will imagine that Wesley would have permitted the American Minutes to have been published without some protest, or allowed the misapprehension concerning the ordination of Dr. Coke to go without correction, unless he had done all that he was sup-

posed to have done, namely, ordain by solemn rite the Rev. Thomas Coke to the office of a bishop. Such is the testimony of the records.

This is also the official declaration of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In her Book of Discipline the following statement was published, first by those who organized the Church, in 1789, and was continued in the same book through all her history till recent editions. In the year 1784 Mr. Wesley sent over three regularly ordained clergy; but, preferring the episcopal mode of Church government to any other, he solemnly set apart, by the imposition of his hands and prayer, one of them, namely, Thomas Coke, Doctor of Civil Law, late of Jesus College, in the University of Oxford, and a presbyter of the Church of England, for the episcopal office; and, having delivered to him letters of episcopal orders, commissioned and directed him to set apart Francis Asbury, then general assistant of the Methodist Society in America, for the same episcopal office; he, the said Francis Asbury, being first ordained deacon and elder. . . . At which time the General Conference held at Baltimore did unanimously receive the said Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury as their bishops, being fully satisfied of the validity of their episcopal ordination."

Literature: Emory's *Defense of Our Fathers;* Stevens's *History of Methodism*, vol. ii; Wesley's *Works*, vols. vi, vii; Sutcliffe's *Short Memoirs of*

Thomas Coke, LL.D.; Coke and Asbury's notes to the Discipline, 1798; Crowther's *Portraiture of Methodism*, 2d English ed.; Atkinson's *Centennial History of American Methodism;* Neely's *Evolution of Episcopacy;* McTyeire's *History of Methodism*, vol. i; Watson's, Moore's, Coke and Moore's, Tyerman's lives of Wesley; Coke's *Journals;* Asbury's *Journal.*

CHAPTER X.

The Authority of Wesley.

HAVING clearly ascertained by means of historical records the intention of Mr. Wesley in setting apart the Rev. Dr. Coke to the episcopal office, the way is now open for us to examine Mr. Wesley's authority for that act.

Let this be premised. Methodist orders are not based, nor are they dependent for their validity, on any supposed power of order derived through uninterrupted episcopal succession. Such succession was denied and repudiated by the founders of Episcopal Methodism, as it was by the founders of the Church of England. And it must now be conceded, if historical facts determine anything, that it is impossible to establish the theory of an unbroken series of prelatical bishops by divine right in the Christian Church from the days of the apostles. In support of this statement there is no need to imitate the uncritical and unsatisfactory arguments of those who place undue emphasis on the difficulty of ascertaining who were the immediate successors of the apostles in the Western Church. For, while it may be shown that there is no unanimity of opinion in this matter among the earliest writers—Irenæus,

Tertullian, Eusebius, Origen, Epiphanius, Damasus, Jerome, Rufinus, all differing among themselves in greater or less degree—the fact nevertheless remains that some one did succeed them in caring for the flock of Christ. Whether he was a bishop in the modern sense, rather than a pastor of a congregation or a president of a body of pastors, is wholly another question. He certainly was not.

On modern Anglican principles the validity of Anglican orders depends on the validity and unbroken continuity of the succession in the Roman Church. There is, however, no record of bishops in the Churches of Britain for five hundred and ninety-six years, until the reestablishment of Christianity there by Augustine. In order to avoid Rome, an attempt is made to derive succession from Ephesus by making it appear that the Bishop of Arles, who consecrated Augustine, had been consecrated himself by a successor of those who succeeded the bishops appointed by the apostle John. But Arles was in the jurisdiction of Rome as far back as the days of Irenæus. Augustine was sent by Rome, and through Rome he received episcopal authority.[1] The Ephesian succession is a myth invented by the necessities of the historic episcopate theory. To Rome at last Anglicans must trace their lineage. The historical fact is that up to the time of the Reformation out of sixty-eight archbishops of Canterbury several were

[1] See Alzog's *Universal Church History*, English translation.

consecrated by Roman popes. Chicheley, Archbishop of Canterbury, was consecrated by John XXIII. This pope had been for some time a contestant for the papal throne, was deposed after great scandal, and all his acts declared null and void. But Chicheley, whom he had consecrated to the see of Canterbury, continued to confer orders, making bishops and presbyters for thirty years in the English Church. Other instances will occur to the student of ecclesiastical history.

But what evidence is there that Rome is in possession of a valid succession? Whatever Anglican writers may do, Roman theologians are too skillful, as, for instance, Cardinal Newman, to risk the authority of their ministry on mere chronological tables. Lists of popes and bishops displayed with all the ingenuity of the printer's art may impose upon the uninformed, but they can have no influence on the judgment of those who have even but a slight knowledge of the turmoils and agitations and fierce conflicts surging for centuries around the throne of Peter. The truth is, neither the Eastern nor the Western Church rely upon such evidences, for it is well known that, even if there were no breaks in the chronological series, the validity of the episcopal ordinations recorded would thereby be in no wise guaranteed. Serial succession is by no means a synonym for valid or apostolical succession. Laymen have been made bishops without ordination to

lower grades. Eucherius was only a layman when made Bishop of Lyons; Philogonius of Antioch was transferred from a judgeship to the episcopacy; Cyprian was but a neophyte when made Bishop of Carthage; so also Ambrose of Milan, and Nectarius of Constantinople. In 784 Tarasius was consecrated to the see of Constantinople, though but a layman, and he ordained bishops and presbyters. Pope John XIX in 1024, while a layman, was elected pope, and he ordained bishops and archbishops. The Duke of Savoy, a layman, was made pope (or antipope) in 1439, and consecrated many to the episcopal office. Augustine was ordained Bishop of Hippo while the bishop of that see was living and had not resigned. Photius of Constantinople was deposed and his acts made of none effect, although he had in the space of nine years ordained many bishops. Bishop Vigilius was put by the renowned Belisarius in the see of Rome, in the place of Bishop Silverius, while Silverius was yet living, whereby the validity of the ordination of eighty-one bishops and forty-six presbyters whom Silverius ordained was destroyed, for the reason that there could not be two bishops in one see. Similar record might be made of Eugenius IV; of the antipope Guibert, and of the four antipopes between A. D. 1159 and 1182. Pope John VIII degraded Formosus from his bishopric and reduced him to the condition of a layman. Formosus afterward at-

tained to the papal chair and ordained Phlegmund to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury, who, for the thirty-two years he held that see, ordained many bishops for the English Church. But Formosus was deposed and condemned after his death by Pope Stephen VII, and also by Pope Sergius, and all his acts made null and void.

The history of the numerous schisms in the Church of Rome, some twenty-six in number, is familiar to the student of history. To suppose that for an absolute certainty there were no breaks in the even flow of episcopal authority during these conflicts may be reckless, but such supposition would not be regarded as either wise or strong. We have but to think of those fierce commotions, in which all wrongs, crimes, disreputable deeds, and uncanonical acts were possible to both parties, to comprehend how difficult it must be to maintain anything approaching to certainty in the matter of valid succession. Witness the struggle for the supremacy between Cornelius and Novatian in A. D. 251; Liberius and Felix in 355; Damasus and Ursicinus, settled in 381; Boniface I and Eulalius in 418; Symmachus and Laurentius in 498; Boniface II and Dioscorus in 530; Silverius and Vigilius; Benedict VIII and his rival, Gregory; the tumults and schisms incident to the struggle for the papacy which disgraced the pontificates of John XVIII, Benedict IX, Gregory VI, and Clement II; the

recriminations of the rival popes during the Great Schism of seventy years; the scandals occasioned by the rivalries of Benedict XIII, of Spain, Gregory XII, of France, and John XXIII, of Italy, each claiming to be the lawful successor of St. Peter, and each ordaining bishops and other clergy. The Reformers repudiated the succession for the English Church; and, with all history to appeal to, Wesley might well say, "Uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable which no man ever did or can prove."

Methodist orders, then, are in no sense founded on the mythical theory of tactual succession. Upon what, then, did Mr. Wesley base his authority? Mr. Wesley appealed for his authority in ordaining Dr. Coke to Holy Scripture, to the practice of the primitive Church, to the call of the Church, and to the necessity of the circumstances. Let us consider in particular some of these grounds:

First, the appeal to Scripture. Mr. Wesley was a presbyter, and therefore, according to the New Testament, possessed the inherent right to ordain. In the New Testament we find two classes of men set apart by apostolic authority to the work of the ministry. The one class is named *διάκονοι*, deacons, ministers, the other *ἐπίσκοποι*, overseers, bishops, superintendents (Acts xx, 28); *οἱ προϊστάμενοι*, presidents (Rom. xii, 8; 1 Thess. v, 12); *οἱ ἡγούμενοι*, leaders, governors (Heb. xiii, 7, 17, 24); *οἱ πρεσβύτεροι*, presbyters, elders, seniors (Acts xx, 17). These titles,

with the exception of *διάκονοι*, all indicate one and the same order or office, that of bishop or elder. The exact truth is, there is but one order, the ministerial order, as distinguished from the laity. All distinctive names, as deacon, elder, bishop, are but different offices in that one ministerial order. The terms "bishop," "presbyter," "elder," "overseer," met with in the New Testament, are all interchangeable, and do not indicate two orders, one superior to the other and different in nature, but one and the same order. This will be clear by comparing Acts xx, 17, with verse 28. The apostle Paul called the presbyters, elders, *πρεσβύτεροι*, of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus. When they came he exhorted them, saying, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, overseers, *ἐπίσκοποι*, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Here those who were called presbyters in one verse are designated as bishops in another. In the Epistle to Titus the apostle writes: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain presbyters in every city, as I had appointed thee." And, having stated the requisite qualifications of presbyters, he gives reasons for care, because he says, "A bishop must be blameless." In 1 Tim. iii, 1–10, the apostle recognizes only two offices in the Church, the episcopate and the

diaconate, for the reason that bishop and presbyter were of the one and the same order. This is seen also in the Epistle to the Philippians, where bishops and deacons are mentioned together. We never find bishops, presbyters, and deacons in the New Testament. In 1 Peter v, 1–3, the apostle exhorts the presbyters to shepherd the flock of God, exercising the episcopal office (ἐπισκοποῦντες) over them. The term "bishop" belongs to the Gentile Christian element, while its New Testament synonym "elder" is almost always used by the Hebrew Christians. "It is worth noting," says Bannerman,[1] "that when these epistles—that to the Philippians and the pastoral epistles—came to be translated into Aramaic for Hebrew Christians, who still used, at least by preference, their ancient speech, the term ἐπίσκοπος was invariably rendered by *kashisho* or 'elder,' and ἐπισκοπή, 'a bishop's office,' *kashishkuts* or 'eldership.'"

The *qualifications* for a bishop and a presbyter are the same. Compare 1 Tim. iii, 2–7, and Titus i, 6–9. Their *duties* and their authority are the same. Compare Heb. xiii, 7, 17, 1 Thess. v, 12, 1 Tim. v, 17, Acts xx, 28, and 1 Peter v, 1–3. Indeed, it is now conceded by nearly all parties that in the New Testament there is no difference between a bishop and a presbyter. Presbyters, therefore, had the inherent right to ordain; they did all that

[1] *Scripture Doctrine of the Church*, p. 409.

is now done by bishops, and this is acknowledged by competent scholars, even among those who contend for the divine right of episcopacy: "In the earliest times, when no formal distinction between ἐπίσκοποι, bishops, and πρεσβύτεροι, presbyters, had taken place, the presbyters, especially the προεστῶτες, presiding bishops (1 Tim. v, 17), discharged those episcopal functions which afterward, when a careful distinction of ecclesiastical officers had been made, they were not permitted to discharge otherwise than as substitutes or vicars of a bishop."[1]

The earliest Christian writers, like the New Testament, know no distinction in order, power, or authority between bishops and presbyters. Clement of Rome, in his epistle to the Corinthians, mentions presbyters and deacons, but does not know any other office. Polycarp exhorts the Philippians to obey the presbyters and deacons, but makes no reference to a bishop, which in the nature of the circumstances he must have made had the episcopal office been distinct from the eldership. Justin Martyr mentions only two orders, of which episcopacy is not one. Irenæus, writing against Gnostic heretics, is also in evidence that even at that date bishops and presbyters were the same as to order: "When we summon them [the heretics] to that tradition which is from the apostles, and which is

[1] Riddle's *Christian Antiquities*, p. 233. See also Hatch's *Organization of Early Christian Churches*, and Lightfoot on the *Epistle to the Philippians*.

guarded in the Churches by the succession of the presbyters, they oppose tradition."[1] "Wherefore we ought to obey the presbyters who are in the Church, who have the succession from the apostles, as we have shown, who, with the succession of the episcopate—*qui cum episcopatus successione*—have received the same gift of truth according to the Father's good pleasure."[2]

Such was the general idea of the Church immediately after the apostles. For wise reasons a change gradually took place, probably first at Rome, one of the presbyters being selected by the others to preside over the Church and direct its affairs. He thus was chosen the presbyter, the ἐπισκοπος, the bishop. To him were delegated certain powers held by all presbyters, and by him they were employed only with the consent of all. When he died another succeeded in his place. This was succession—lineal succession of place, not of authority derived from other bishops, but from the Church which had already made him bishop in the place of the departed. Neighboring bishops were called in to sanction, confirm, or recognize the new chief pastor. In time these bishops were considered as necessary to the conveyance of certain gifts, powers, and authority, and thus gradually, by custom of the Church, bishops became a distinct order from the presbyters.

[1] *Adversus Hæreses*, lib. iii, c. 2. [2] *Ibid.*, lib. iv, c. 43.

The venerable presbyter John Wesley, going behind ecclesiastical canons and customs, went back to the New Testament and claimed the divine right to exercise the power of a presbyter, or scriptural bishop, which as such belonged to him by the divine authority of the New Testament. This authority none can dispute; higher authority none can give.

Second, the appeal to the practice of the primitive Church. But Wesley did not rely solely upon private interpretation of Scripture. The practice and teaching of the apostles must have been continued for some little time, at least, in the Churches which they had founded. To that primitive period of the Church Wesley directed his attention, and there found, as others had before, those same practices in operation which were usual in the days of the apostles. History and Scripture interpreted each other, both establishing the fact that presbyters had inherent right to ordain. This also may now be regarded as conceded. Professor Gore, of Oxford, however, ably defends a contrary view. But, with all respect to his eminent abilities, the evidence is immovably against him. Jerome, than whom no one was better versed in the traditions and customs of the early Church, distinctly teaches as historic fact that through many episcopates in the Alexandrian Church "the presbyters always called one elected by themselves, and placed in a

higher rank, bishop, just as an army may constitute its general, or deacons may elect one of themselves, whom they know to be diligent, and call him archdeacon."[1] The purpose of Jerome is to show that in the first period of the Church the presbyters had the power of appointing a presiding presbyter, who thereby became the bishop over all his college of presbyters. Lightfoot[2] quotes a decree of the Council of Ancyra—A. D. 314—which strongly supports this view. According to this ancient decision neither the *χωρεπίσκοποι*—country bishops—nor city presbyters were to be permitted to ordain without permission in writing of the bishop of the parish. Without question, if it had not been the custom for presbyters to ordain this decree would never have been made, for laws are not enacted against nonentities, but against existing evils, possible evils, or for the limitation of existing rights. And it will be observed that the prohibition is not against presbyters ordaining, but against their ordaining without permission.

Further testimony that presbyters did ordain is given by Eutychius, a patriarch of Alexandria. His testimony has been the subject of much controversy because of its great and conclusive importance, but all attempts to explain it away or to minimize its value or to weaken its credibility have proved utterly futile. Having stated that the evan-

[1] Epistle to Evagrius. [2] *Commentary on Philippians.*

gelist Mark preached in Alexandria and founded the Church there, appointing one Hananias as its first patriarch, Eutychius continues:[1]

Moreover, he appointed twelve presbyters with Hananias, who were to remain with the patriarch, so that when the patriarchate was vacant they might elect one of the twelve presbyters, upon whose head the other eleven might place their hands and bless him and create him patriarch, and then choose some excellent man and appoint him presbyter with themselves in the place of him who was thus made patriarch, that thus there might always be twelve. Nor did this custom respecting the presbyters, namely, that they should create their patriarchs from the twelve presbyters, cease at Alexandria until the times of Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria, who was of the number of the three hundred and eighteen [the bishops of the Nicene Council]. But he forbade the presbyters to create the patriarch for the future, and decreed that when the patriarch was dead the bishops should meet and ordain the patriarch; moreover, that on a vacancy of the patriarchate they should elect, either from any country, or from the twelve presbyters, or others, as circumstances might prescribe, some excellent man and create him patriarch. And thus that ancient custom by which the patriarch used to be created by the presbyters disappeared, and in its place succeeded the ordinance for the creation of the patriarch by the bishops.

Eutychius is not alone in this testimony. Hilary the Deacon, supposed author of certain commentaries on the Pauline epistles, notes:

Moreover, in Egypt the presbyters confirm if a bishop is not present. But because the presbyters that followed began to be found unworthy to hold the primacy (*primatus*) the custom was altered, a council providing that not order, but merit, ought to make a bishop, and that he should be appointed by the judgment of many priests.

[1] *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ.* Translated by Selden, and quoted by Goode, *Rule of Faith*, vol. ii, p. 255.

Augustine, having stated that a bishop is but a first presbyter, says:

> And it is base to call a pronotary, or archdeacon, a judge, for in Alexandria and through the whole of Egypt the presbyter consecrates if the bishop is absent.[1]

The evidence now before us, together with the testimony of early Christian writers respecting the parity of bishops and presbyters—such testimony, in addition to that already given throughout these pages, as may be adduced from the works of Tertullian,[2] Clement of Alexandria,[3] Eusebius,[4] Cyprian, Firmilian,[5] Hilary the Deacon,[6] Chrysostom,[7] Theodoret,[8] and many others—must, in the mind of any fair-minded inquirer after historic truth, certainly vindicate the appeal of Wesley to the practice of the primitive Church.

Third, the necessity of the case. In further defense of his action Mr. Wesley, in his letter to "Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and our Brethren in North America," referred to the religious destitution of the thousands in America who looked to him in the providence of God as their spiritual guide and chief. Serious consideration of the deplorable condition of these thousands and the futility of appealing further to Anglican bishops left him, as the providential leader of the great Methodist movement, no

[1] *Quæstiones*, 191. [2] *Apologeticus*, c. 39; *De Corona*, c. 3.
[3] *Stromata*, lib. vi, c. 7. [4] Lib. iii, c. 22. [5] *Epistle to Cyprian.*
[6] *Com. ad Ephesios.* [7] *Exposit.* 1 *Epis. ad Tim.*, Hom. xi.
[8] *Interpret. Epis. ad Phil.*, also *Interpret. Epis. ad Timotheum.*

alternative; the necessity of the case compelled him to accept the responsibility which providence had placed upon him. If some objector of philosophical turn should observe that the providence was of Wesley's own making, in that this act of ordination was the logical outcome of Wesley's labors for many years, and was not therefore necessarily a direct providence of God, we may observe, in turn, that even if it be granted that that is true, still the Lord himself was a helper of Wesley in making this providential crisis through all those years, and it was therefore as truly from God when it did come as if Wesley's labors had not produced it. Wesley knew the hour had come in a most extraordinary manner, by means of the liberation of the American colonies, and he dared not shrink from his manifest duty. "Here, therefore," he writes, "my scruples are at an end, and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right by appointing and sending laborers into the harvest."

This appeal to necessity is universally recognized as valid. It certainly must be by the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church. Bishop Burnet, commenting on Article XXIII of the English Articles of Religion, states and explains the principle:

> Finally, if a company of Christians find the public worship of God where they live to be so defiled that they cannot with a good conscience join in it, and if they do not know of any

place to which they can conveniently go where they may worship God purely and in a regular way—if, I say, such a body, finding some that have been ordained, though to the lower functions, should submit itself entirely to their conduct, or, finding none of those, should by a common consent desire some of their own number to minister to them in holy things, and should upon that beginning grow up to a regulated constitution, though we are very sure that this is quite out of all rule, and could not be done without a very great sin, unless the necessity were great and apparent, yet if the necessity is real and not feigned, this is not condemned or annulled by the Article; for when this grows to a constitution, and when it was begun by the consent of a body who are supposed to have an authority in such an extraordinary case, whatever some hotter spirits have thought of this since that time, yet we are very sure that not only those who penned the Articles, but the body of this Church for above half an age after, did, notwithstanding these irregularities, acknowledge the foreign Churches so constituted to be true Churches as to all the essentials of a Church.

The Church of England itself was born of necessity. The irregularities in the organization of the foreign Churches which Anglicanism now affects to deplore were as notorious in the founding of the Episcopal Church of England as in any of the Reformed Churches of Europe. Matthew Parker was said to have been elected archbishop by the chapter of Canterbury as the canons direct. Passing over the fact that such election was illegal, since, according to a law of Edward VI (1 Edward, VI, c. 2), which law was not repealed at the time Parker is said to have been elected, the election itself could hardly be considered free. The chapter numbered twelve prebendaries. There was one

vacancy, and out of the remaining eleven only four were present, and the vote was left to the dean. Again, since the consecrators of Parker, such as Barlow, Hodgkins, and Scory, were bishops of no place, and had no jurisdiction over any place until they were confirmed by Parker, whom they first consecrated, how could they confer jurisdiction on Matthew Parker? Here is the second important, and as unfortunate as it is important, irregularity at the very beginning of the Anglican hierarchy.

We are well apprised of the defense made in this behalf, especially by the Rev. Mr. Bailey, which is summed up in a note to Dr. Pusey's *Eirenicon*. The gist of that note is that "the metropolitical see in each country has inherent jurisdiction according to the ancient canons. Parker was left in undisputed succession of the see of Canterbury, and his successors have the jurisdiction inherent in that see." Without placing much emphasis on the fiction of jurisdiction residing in an impersonal, impalpable, supposed entity, we may affirm our acquiescence in the correctness of the principle quoted. But the principle is one thing, the application of it is quite another. By what right does Dr. Pusey or any other Anglican apply that principle to the Protestant Church of England? The principle cannot apply, for there was a complete change of religion, of Church, of ministry, and it is sheer nonsense to go on talking about principles of the early Church as

if they had any relation to the Church of the Reformation. Then, while the succession in the see of Canterbury was not disputed, it is well known that dispute of it was of no avail. The religious revolution swept away the past and all things became new. But if the Reformers at the beginning of the English Church had the right, as they certainly had, to assume jurisdiction in England by the aid of force granted by the civil power and by driving out the Roman bishops from their sees, by what right can Anglicans assume that the thousands of Methodists in North America had no inherent right to self-government, no jurisdiction over the things spiritual among themselves? If a small minority of Englishmen had the right to repudiate the Roman Church and to assume control of their own religious matters, by what law is the same right denied to fifteen thousand Christians in America to govern themselves, following the Scripture and the primitive Church, when they are left without any Church to care for them or to provide in any way for their future needs? Whatever defense is made for the assumption of jurisdiction by the first bishops of the English Church, that same defense holds good in every particular for the Rev. John Wesley, who expressly declared (and he is sustained by the facts of history) that he violated no order nor invaded any man's right in sending laborers into the New World on the collapse of the English Church and the extinction of all spiritual

jurisdiction by that Church in the American colonies.

Further, that the Anglican episcopacy rests on the doctrine of necessity is clearly seen in the extraordinary wording of the famous Supplying Clause, which definitely supplies by royal authority alone any defect in the powers of Parker's consecrators —anything in condition, state, or power "which, either by the statutes of this realm or by the ecclesiastical laws, are required or are necessary on this behalf, the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary." Necessity, then, is the avowed basis of the English episcopacy. But that was the precise plea of Wesley in justification of his ordaining ministers for the thousands in America. What defense, then, can be sustained in behalf of the Anglican episcopacy that is not historically and morally valid in defense of Methodist episcopacy?

Hooker, whose fame in the ecclesiastical annals of England is yet undimmed by the mists of time, laid down the principle of necessity in his celebrated work on Church polity[1] thus:

As the ordinary course is ordinarily in all things to be observed, so it may be, in some cases, not unnecessary that we decline from the ordinary ways. Men may be extraordinarily, yet allowably, two ways admitted into spiritual functions in the Church. One is when God himself doth raise up any whose labor he useth, without requiring that men should authorize

[1] Book vii, chap. xiv.

them ; but then he doth ratify their calling by manifest signs and tokens himself from heaven. . . . Another extraordinary kind of vocation is when the exigency of necessity doth constrain to leave the usual ways of the Church, . . . when the Church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possibly a bishop to ordain ; in case of such necessity the ordinary institution of God hath given oftentimes, and may give, place.

The same principle was held by Saravia, the friend of Hooker;[1] also by Archdeacon Francis Mason, who, in his *Vindication of Anglican Orders*, defends the validity of the foreign Reformed Churches on the ground of necessity. Whitgift, Hoadley, Sutcliffe, Ussher, all the old defenders of the Anglican Church, held the same principle. Field, whom all Anglicans revere, says (and the utmost weight must be given to his deliberate judgment):

And who knoweth not that all presbyters in case of necessity may absolve and reconcile penitents, a thing in ordinary course appropriated unto bishops? And why not, by the same reason, ordain presbyters and deacons in cases of like necessity? . . . There is no reason to be given but that, in case of necessity, wherein all bishops were extinguished by death or, being fallen into heresy, should refuse to ordain any to serve God in his true worship, but that presbyters, as they may do all other acts, whatsoever special challenge bishops in ordinary course may make upon them, might do this also. Who, then, dare condemn these worthy ministers of God that were ordained by presbyters, in sundry Churches of the world, at such times as bishops, in those parts where they lived, opposed themselves against the truth of God and persecuted such as professed it? Surely the best learned in the Church of Rome in former times did not

[1] *Defens. Tract. de Div. Min.*, c. ii.

pronounce all ordinations of this nature to be void. For not only Armachanus, but, as it appeareth by Alexander of Hales, many learned men in his time and before were of opinion that in some cases presbyters may give orders, . . . though to do so, not being urged by extreme necessity, cannot be excused from over-great boldness and presumption.

Thus we see the plea of necessity is a valid plea. On that ground the founders and defenders of the English Church vindicated the organization of that Church and the orders of its ministry, as they also did the Reformed Churches on the Continent.

From what has been set forth to the effect that according to Scripture, the supreme authority, bishops and presbyters are of the same order and that presbyters have therefore inherent right to ordain; that in the primitive Church presbyters did exercise that right; and further, in cases of necessity, in order that the truth of God may not perish among any Christian people and that they may not be deprived of the consolations of religion, the administration of the holy sacraments—from all this testimony, we say, produced in the establishment of these several propositions, it cannot be denied that the Rev. John Wesley had full and sufficient authority for the ordination of Dr. Coke and the sending of other ordained ministers to the religiously destitute thousands of North America. If this argument fails in the case of John Wesley there is not a Protestant Church in Europe or America that can vindicate its existence. Scripture,

history, reason, and the Christian consciousness all combine in approval of the act. The only discordant note among all the harmonious voices is that of the Anglican Church, which was itself the creature of necessity.

The reader who may desire to pursue the subject further, that is, to find other precedents for the action of Mr. Wesley, may consult histories of the Reformed Churches of Denmark and of Sweden, in which Churches the bishops were called superintendents, as Wesley named Coke. The following works, in addition to the well-known monographs, will be of service: Gerdesius, *Introductio in Histor. Evangel. Renovat*, tom. iii, page 111; Desroches, *Histoire de Dannemark*, tom. v, page 132; Professor Mallet, *Histoire de Dannemark*, tom. vi, pages 367, 368; Moreri, *Dictionnaire Historique*, tom. ii, page 361. On Sweden consult Messenius, *Schondia Illustrata*, tom. v, page 54.

CHAPTER XI.

Doctrine of Necessity—Power of the Church.

IN the preceding chapter we have seen that a plea of genuine necessity must be in the nature of things a valid plea in justification of ordination by a presbyter, or even for the reinstitution of a ministry *de novo*. From that conclusion there can be no defensible dissent. The Church of God must have within itself the power of self-perpetuation. We cannot conceive a possible ground for guilt, if the ministry in any country were cut off by the sword and the surviving membership of the persecuted and desolated Church should call godly men from among themselves and solemnly dedicate them to the office of the ministry, in order that the truth of God should not perish among them. So, also, if a company of Christians were shipwrecked and thrown upon an island in remote latitudes, their duty would be to select qualified men and appoint them as pastors. Wherever Christ is, there is the Church. If the risen Lord is with his people—and he assuredly is—then in exceptional providences they have the right, with a single eye to his glory, to do that which in their godly judgment is the best for the preservation

of the truth. They are not to know the future before they act, for that belongs alone to God. Their duty is to do that which is demanded by the necessities brought about by the extraordinary providences which have hemmed them in.

But it is not sufficient that the principle of necessity be established. A principle may be correct; the application of it to any particular instance may be illogical and false. We are not at liberty, therefore, to avail ourselves of any benefit obtainable from this concession without clearly proving that the case to which the principle is to be applied is truly an instance of real necessity.

The questions before us, then, are: Was there a real necessity in the case of the Methodists in North America for the ordination of Dr. Coke? And did the Methodists represented in General Conference at Baltimore, December, 1784, have the right to receive the bishops and presbyters appointed through Mr. Wesley?

The reality of the necessity becomes apparent at once when we consider the religious condition of the American colonies at the close of the Revolutionary War. All the Churches had suffered severely in organization, in membership, and in spiritual character. The long-continued conflict which had well-nigh exhausted the resources of the State had almost completed the destruction of ecclesiastical governments. The Presbyterians were not able

to convene a General Assembly until 1789; the Baptists and Congregationalists were in similar condition. But Methodism, owing to its itinerating ministry, which traveled constantly through every province, emerged from the war with few traces of hardship, although it was loyal to the cause of the patriots and was strongest in those provinces which suffered most in the war. The Methodists were organized and quick with contagious vitality. They numbered some fourscore preachers and fifteen thousand members. And yet they were far from being contented with their ecclesiastical state, if their anomalous position may be so designated, for they were a Church without a sacrament. From every part of the country arose complaints and murmurings which threatened the solidarity of the body. In 1779 the preachers in Virginia openly revolted from the general connection. Ill-omened symptoms appeared elsewhere, and could not be suppressed. The cause of all this was not dissatisfaction with the character of the ministry, or with the almost autocratic government of the Conference, or with the doctrines which were then peculiar to Methodism, but to the lack of authority in the preachers to administer to the people the ordinances of religion. To the thousands scattered through the colonies these itinerant preachers had preached the word of God and won multitudes from a sinful life; upon their labors Heaven bestowed

marvelous blessings; the vitalizing power of their spiritual passion for humanity was quickening the religiously torpid life of the new era; but to no soul brought by them to a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ could they administer the sacrament of baptism or break the bread in the holy communion. They were preachers, not ministers. Notwithstanding the earnest appeals of Mr. Wesley, the bishops in England had persistently refused to ordain even one minister for this service, and out of deference to the will of Wesley and a decent regard for immemorial usage these preachers refrained from exercising the office of consecrated ministers.

From the Churches about them no help could be obtained—even if that were of any value in the judgment of Anglicans—owing to doctrinal differences. The Methodists were Arminians; the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists were Calvinists. In the opinion of these and other denominations Methodism was rank heresy, fed by unrestrained enthusiasm, and productive in its logical outcome only of fanatical disorder and widespread ruin. To the Arminian Calvinism was a monstrous caricature of the benevolence and justice of God, repugnant to Holy Scripture rightly interpreted, and at war with human reason. Between opposing beliefs so strongly emphasized there could be but little sympathy. From neither Presbyterians nor Congregationalists could Methodist

families obtain baptism for their children, unless one of the parents professed their doctrines. The Baptists were more exclusive. Immersion was the one absolute condition for receiving the communion, and baptism to children was as absolutely forbidden. The Church of England was utterly disorganized and unable to minister to those of her own communion. Many of the clergy had espoused the cause of the Tories against the American patriots and had fled the country. Everywhere the Church was involved in the defeat of the English, and vacant charges in every colony—there being no less than seventy in four provinces—testified to her helpless and forlorn state. At the beginning of the war the Episcopal Church in Virginia had ninety-five parishes and ninety-one ministers. At the close of the conflict she had only seventy-two parishes, thirty-four of which had no pastors; and out of the ninety-one ministers only twenty-eight remained. Among the churches having pastors there was no more unity than there is between particles of sand in a sand heap. The future was dark, and the probability that a new Episcopal organization would ever rise on the ruins of the old was as uncertain as the possibility of obtaining Episcopal ordination was doubtful. Subsequent events show how well grounded were these doubts. Dr. Seabury, who went to England to obtain the succession, was refused by the Anglican bishops,

and was compelled to seek ordination from non-juring bishops in Scotland. Afterward, when another effort was made, a special act of Parliament was required before the legal authority could be granted for the consecration. No one can read Bishop White's *Memoirs of the Protestant Episcopal Church*, or his pamphlet, *The Case of the Episcopal Churches in the United States Considered*, and not be impressed with the almost hopeless condition of the Episcopal Church, on account of the changes involved in the success of the Revolution and the loose opinions concerning episcopacy in the body itself. "From the operation of these causes," says Wilson, in his memoir of Bishop White, "the Episcopal Church, at the close of the Revolution, was reduced to a very low condition, and almost in danger of extinction, most of the clergy having died or removed from the country or retired from active duty, and none ordained to supply their place, and her congregations in most places broken up or dispersed. The danger of this evil may be estimated by the fact, formerly mentioned, that in Pennsylvania Dr. White was for some time the only clergyman; and in other States, even those in which the clergy had been most numerous, very few remained. In addition to all these embarrassments it was known that differences of opinion on some important points existed in the Church itself, particularly between the clergy of the Eastern

States and those of the South, which might lead to disunion. And the want of bishops and the very inadequate supply of clergy prevented any vigorous and systematic exertion for her improvement." Under such circumstances what could the Methodists do other than they did? An ordained ministry they were compelled to have: the necessity was imperative, and Wesley, by the force of providential events, was under necessity to assist these poor sheep in the wilderness. They did not make the circumstances of the situation; they did not create the events which led to the overthrow of the Anglican Church: nor did they separate themselves from her communion, wilfully breaking through every law and custom in a fanatical, headstrong spirit, actuated by schismatical and lawless desires to set up for themselves an independent organization. Those who attribute such conduct and such motives to the Methodists of that formative period know little either of their spirit or of their early history.

Among the first rules agreed upon by the preachers, and published in 1773, were these:

"1. Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley and the brethren who labor in America is strictly to avoid administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

"2. All the people among whom we labor to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church [that is,

Church of England] and receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute."

At the Conference held April 28, 1779, a resolution in the form of question and answer was adopted that they would continue to maintain connection with the Church of England:

"*Question.* Shall we guard against a separation from the Church, directly or indirectly?

"*Answer.* By all means."

Again, in 1780, the following year, among the questions propounded in Conference at Baltimore, April 24, and printed in the Minutes of that year, were these:

"*Quest.* 12. Shall we continue in close connection with the Church and press our people to a closer communion with her?

"*Ans.* Yes.

"*Quest.* 13. Will this Conference grant the privilege to all the friendly clergy of the Church of England, at the request or desire of the people, to preach or administer the ordinances in our preaching houses or chapels?

"*Ans.* Yes."

In Virginia, where the Episcopal clergy had lax opinions concerning episcopacy, as Dr. Wilson observes above, some of the Methodist preachers, tired of waiting for ordained ministers to administer the

sacraments, assumed, contrary to the consensus of Methodism, that prerogative and began to administer the ordinances. But so opposed was this assumption of the ministerial office to the traditions and beliefs of the majority that, rather than recognize the validity of the act, they would sever all connection with them. The time for such a departure had not yet come. Necessity there was, but such a necessity as might be longer endured. They were not willing to consider even a pressing need as a compelling necessity. Consequently at this same Conference in Baltimore, in which they affirmed their desire to remain in close connection with the Church, these questions were put:

"*Quest.* 20. Does this whole Conference disapprove the step our brethren have taken in Virginia?

"*Ans.* Yes.

"*Quest.* 21. Do we look upon them no longer as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back?

"*Ans.* Yes."

Thus it is made manifest that in yielding to the necessity of their situation the Methodists were in no wise inspired with schismatical notions. But what other course was open to them? They now numbered fifteen thousand members; an itinerating ministry which traveled to the remotest picket line on the frontier kept them intact, vigorous, and aggressive; upon them the grace of God had been

shed in abundance, and everywhere by their evangelical teachings and holy lives they were leavening society. By a combination of events the Episcopal Church, to which they had been attached, was swept from its foundations. They maintained their organization. But were they now to disband and break into isolated fragments because the Bishop of London refused to ordain a clergyman? To continue as they were, a Church without a ministry, was not possible. In 1789 the framers of the Prayer Book of the Protestant Episcopal Church recognized in the Preface of that book the free state in which all the Churches were left by the result of the Revolution:

"When in the course of divine Providence these American States became independent with respect to civil government their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included, and the different religious denominations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective Churches and forms of worship and discipline in such manner as they might judge most convenient for their future prosperity, consistently with the Constitution and laws of their country."

The Methodists were therefore as free as any. Because they were free, and were not at liberty to disregard the providential leadings in their history, they did not choose to become as chaff be-

fore the wind. They had the divine right to exist. But they could not exist without an ordained ministry. That they must have. The necessity was upon them. They had a right to a ministry. The hierarchy in England refused to heed the appeals for such a ministry. Wesley as a presbyter had the power to ordain; he, under God, was the leader of the great awakening; him the people and preachers called; and he, having long refused, yielded to the absolute necessity of the case. He recognized that they were between the mountains and the sea and that they must cross over or perish.

It is true that in exercising his New Testament right he violated ecclesiastical canons. But not to violate Church canons when they stand in the way of the very purpose for which the Church was organized is to be guilty of a greater wrong than the violation of all the canons that have ever been enacted. It is to destroy the Church itself by destroying the reason for its existence, the salvation of men. Had Wesley refused to ordain a ministry for the Methodists in their necessity—and nothing could have been added that would have made their case more necessitous—he would have been responsible for all the evils that would have followed. Nothing could have justified him at the bar of history. Wisdom, however, is justified of her children, and the history of Episcopal Methodism is the justification of Wesley.

The authority of the Methodists assembled at

Baltimore to call and to receive the ministers appointed by Mr. Wesley is involved in the question of necessity. But we may consider this question, in briefest manner, as one separate and distinct.

As a body of Christians they had, under the peculiar circumstances of their condition, a divine right to appoint suitable persons from among themselves to the office and work of the Christian ministry or to accept ministers ordained by Mr. Wesley. Illustrations of this principle may be given in abundance from the history of the Churches of the Reformation. We see it advocated by eminent authorities in the Church of England, and the reader of the preceding pages will recall the teachings of Burnet, Field, Saravia, and Hooker. By those who regard all authority in the Church as coming to it from without, that is, from a ministry constituting an essentially distinct body from and independent of the Church, this principle will be of necessity denied; but it cannot be rejected by those who conceive the Church as deriving authority, not only by external means, by grants and privileges traceable to apostolic acts and precedents, but also by virtue of the divine life within.

The Church of God, according to the ideal presented to us in the New Testament, is not an agglomeration of individuals, a coterie, a club, society, or propaganda controlled by purely human ideas, having for its main object ethical culture, social

improvement, the advancement, in a word, of what is called civilization, however praiseworthy such objects might be. It is not organized politics. It is organized religion. It is not a lifeless, soulless mass operative only as it is moved upon by external forces. It is a living organism animated by the Spirit of the living God, who works in it and through it for the realization of the divine purpose in human history. It is not a lawless aggregation of atoms incapable of unity of action for a given end. It is the ideal solidarity. This is the apostolic idea in 1 Cor. xii, where the local Church is compared to the human body, composed of many members, each having its own function relative to the purpose of the whole organism, but animated by the one conscious, purposeful spirit within. The mission of the Church is the spiritual regeneration of humanity. This is its sole reason in history—the bringing by the force of divine truth of all world powers, whether moral or social, political or intellectual, into right relations with God as he has revealed himself in Jesus Christ, the climax of God's revealing power.

To this end the Holy Ghost, the interpreter of Jesus Christ, dwells in the Church. He dwells there because he dwells in the heart of every true member of the Church. The Spirit touches human spirit and by contact with it imparts to it his own divine quality of life, thus making it holy. To the degree that the individual membership is sanctified

by the Spirit and is led by him and by personal abandonment of self into the light of the written word, that safeguard against fanaticism, to that degree is the Church the organized force through which the Holy Ghost quickens humanity and imparts to it the life of God.

Further, in a living body there must inhere the power of adjustment to changing environments. An organism which is not adaptable to varying conditions is limited to one place, to one sort of conditions which do not change; for, if there is any change, the unchangeable, unadjustable organism is immediately thrown out of relation to its environments, and it dies. There is lack of correspondence between internal and external conditions. Therefore in order to accomplish its mission the Church also, whether we consider it universally or locally, must be able to adjust itself to the ever-changing conditions and necessities of each succeeding age. Whatever will enable it to achieve the end of its existence, the purpose for which it was organized, it is its divine right and its paramount duty to perform. Of all this the Church has been conscious from the beginning. It knows that it is animated by a divine life; it knows that there is in it a guiding power not wholly its own, and that only apostasy from the truth in thought or life will deprive it of the Spirit promised and given by the Lord Jesus. In the strength of this consciousness it teaches that if the majority of the

Church should fall from the faith the Church would still be perfect in the minority, as Israel fell and yet a remnant was preserved.

At the formal organization of the Church at Pentecost there was given it all needful powers for the successful prosecution of its mission to the end of time. "Now there are diversities of gifts," says the apostle, in 1 Cor. xii, "but the same Spirit.... And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." But, in addition to these powers which the ascended Lord sent down to his Church, we find another order of gifts somewhat different in their nature: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." And in Eph. iv he writes, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangel-

ists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

Here, then, we see the Church endowed with certain gifts or powers, some temporary, some perpetual. These endowments belong solely to no age or particular local Church; but, as the promise of Christ to be with his disciples was not for them only, but also for all who should truly succeed them in the same ministry, so these powers, which are for the perpetuation of the Church, were not confined to the Churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, or Thessalonica, but come down to all Churches that succeed them in the same faith to the end of time, whether the national Church of England, or Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Methodist. Doctrine, and not name, is the apostolic touchstone of genuine succession.

The source of authority, then, is the Church. It did not, it is true, originate the ministry, nor did the ministry originate itself. But at no time was that a lawful ministry which was in opposition to the voice of the Church. Out of itself, quickened by the Holy Spirit, it calls those who are quickened, because belonging to it vitally, to minister in the things of the Spirit. This is the outward call which corresponds to the inward call, and without that outward call no one has a right to the Christian ministry. This call the Methodists, who were as truly a Christian people

organized for the work of redemption as was the Church of England, gave to John Wesley, and he, recognizing under the providential circumstances the voice of God in the voice of the Church, obeyed the summons. They had the right to call him. Every argument against their right under the circumstances is an argument against the origin of every Church of the Reformation. Always, in all ages of the Church until Rome usurped the power, the people had the right, and exercised the right, to call ministers. "All power and grace," says Firmilian in his epistle to Cyprian (see *Ante-Nicene Library*, American edition, p. 392), "are established in the Church, where the elders preside, who possess the power both of baptizing and of imposition of hands and of ordaining." "The bishop shall be chosen," writes Cyprian (*ibid.*, p. 371), "in the presence of the people who have most fully known the life of each one as respects his habitual conduct. And this also we see was done by you in the ordination of our colleague Sabinus, so that by the suffrage of the whole brotherhood, and by the sentence of the bishops who had assembled in their presence and who had written letters to you concerning him, the episcopate was conferred upon him." Augustine constantly affirms that the power of the keys resides in the Church, the key of ordination and the key of jurisdiction. All ancient authorities agree to the same. A writer in the *British Quarterly Review* (January, 1877), in a

learned article on "Priesthood in the Light of the New Testament," quotes an important statement from an eminent authority in harmony with the view here presented. "Tostatus, Bishop of Avila," he notes, "in his great commentary, says: 'For the power of a prelate does not take its origin from itself, but from the Church, by means of the election it makes of him. The Church that chose him gives him that jurisdiction; but as for the Church, it receives it from nobody after its having once received it from Jesus Christ. The Church has the keys originally and virtually, and whenever she gives them to a prelate she does not give them to him after the manner that she has them, to wit, originally and virtually, but she gives them to him only as to use.'"

To sum up the foregoing: We see that the Methodists of the American colonies were hemmed in by necessity; that it was a real necessity; that, it being a real necessity, there was no law invalidating the ordination of Dr. Coke by the Rev. John Wesley, who, as a presbyter in the Church, had an inherent right to ordain. We see that a body of Christians, because they are such, have the right to a ministry, and that if this right is denied them by the ordinary channels for the transmission of authority they have the God-given right among themselves to exercise that authority. This was the right insisted upon by the founders of the Anglican Church.

Jewel, it will be remembered, in writing against the Romanist Harding, affirmed the same doctrine which we have laid down: "If none of those ministers, nor of us, were alive, yet the Church of England would not flee to Louvain for Roman orders, for the Church would have power to institute its own orders, as Tertullian saith, 'And we, being laymen, are we not priests?'"

Thus do we complete the argument for the scriptural and historical validity of Methodist orders. They, it will be seen, rest on the same foundation as do the orders of the Church of England or its offshoot, the Protestant Episcopal Church, and every argument in defense of the episcopate in those Churches is equally valid in defense of the historic episcopate in Episcopal Methodism.

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